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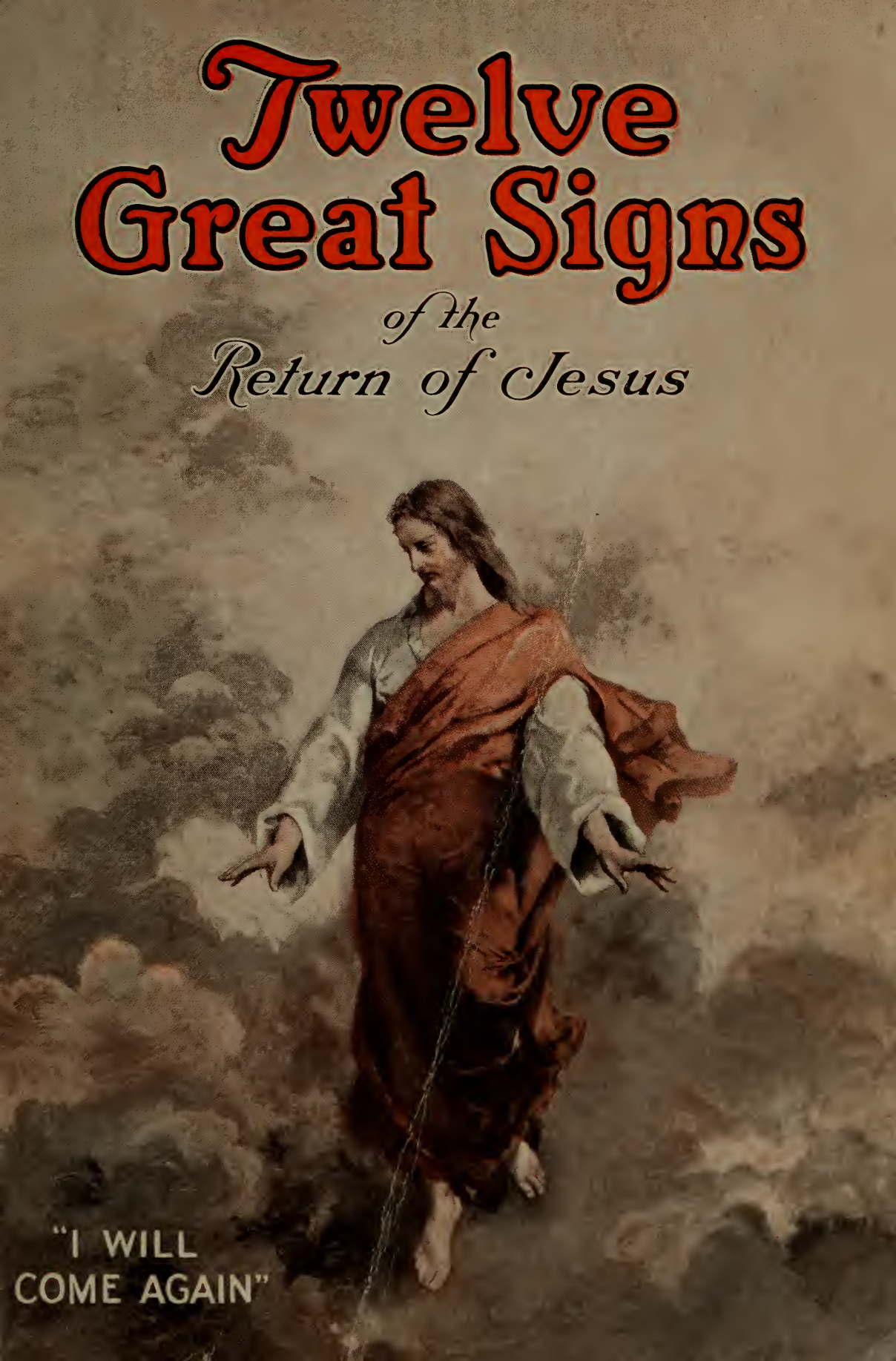
Twelve Great Signs

of the

Return of Jesus



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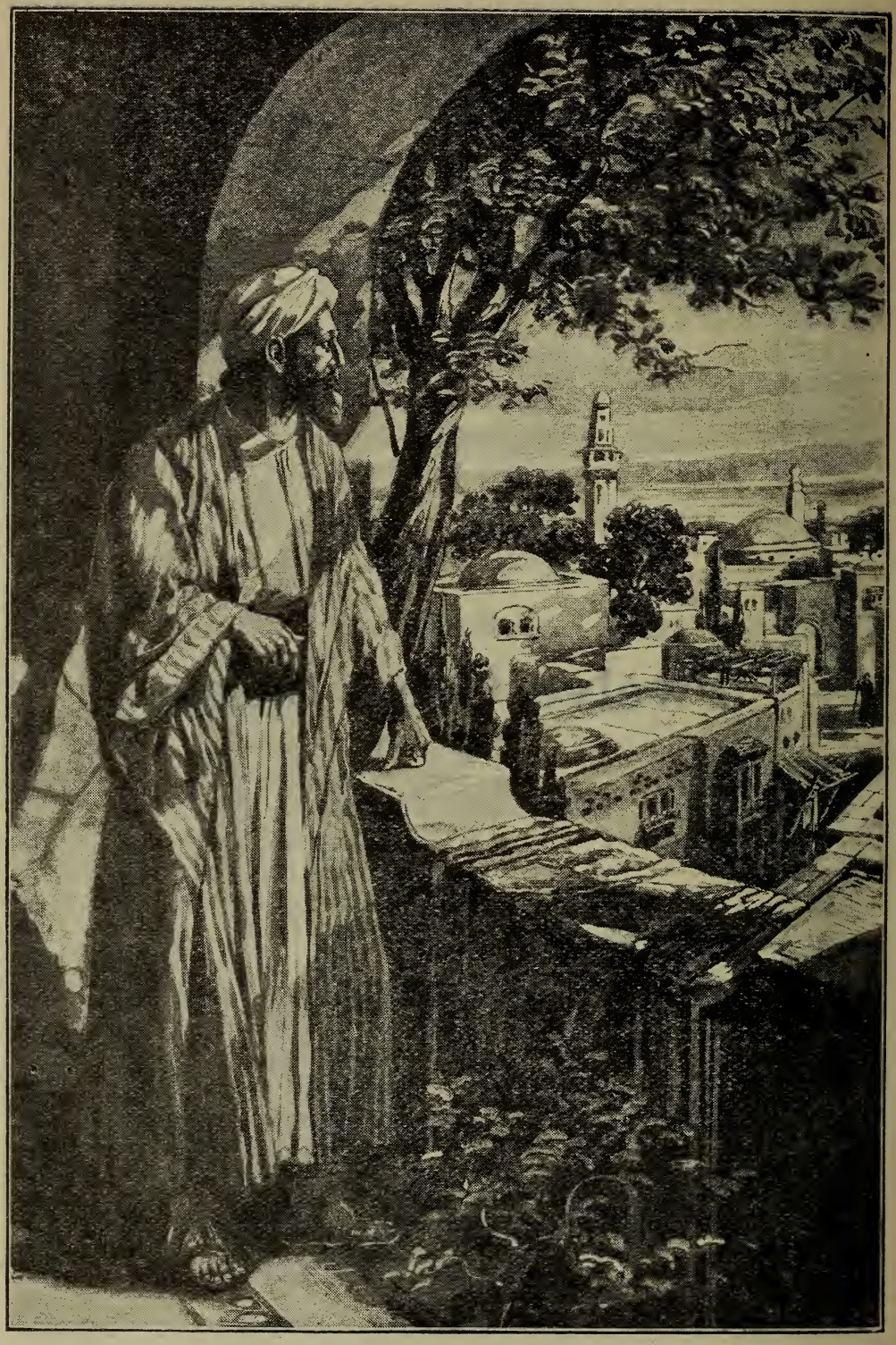

THE FAITHFUL STEWARD

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when He cometh shall find watching." Luke 12:37.

Twelve Great Signs

of the

Return of Jesus

An Exposition of the Bible Predictions Relating to "The Time of the End," with Special Reference to the Evidences Demonstrating the Imminence of the Second Coming of Our Lord, and an Explanation of the Fulfilment of These Divine Prophecies in Present-day Developments, and the Conditions Which Now Prevail in the World and in the Church

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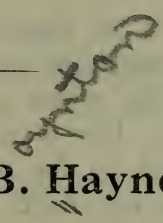

By Carlyle B. Haynes

Author of "Our Lord's Return," "The Other Side of Death," "The Christian Sabbath," "What Is Coming?" "Spiritualism Versus Christianity," "Satan; His Origin, Work, and Destiny," "On the Eve of Armageddon," and "Christianity at the Crossroads."

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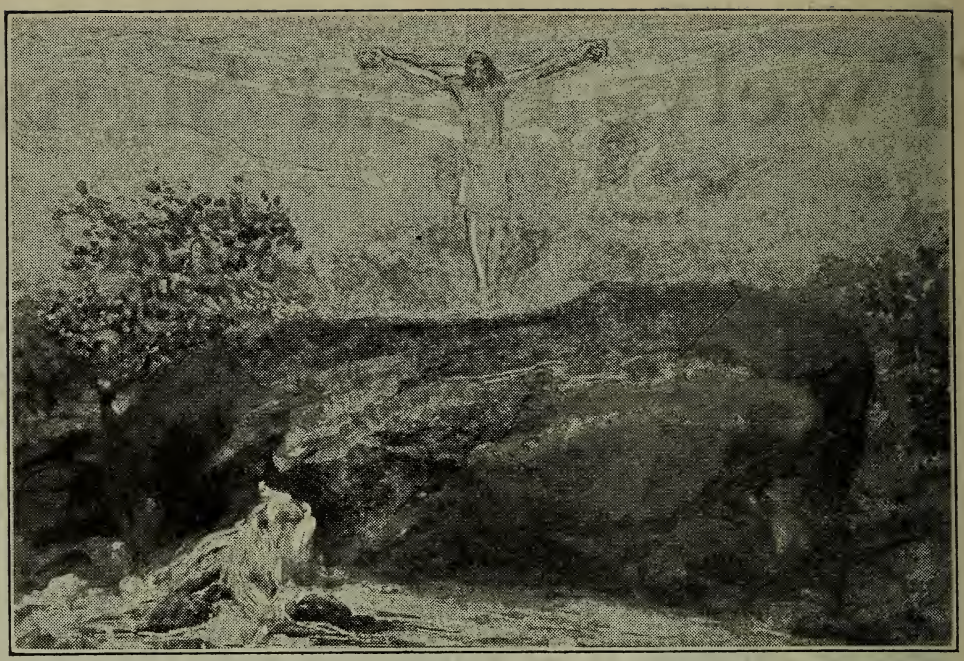

THE ROCK OF OUR SALVATION

"They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." 1 Cor. 10:4.

Rock of Ages

ROCK of Ages, cleft for me!
Let me hide myself in Thee;
Let the water and the blood,
From Thy wounded side that flowed,
Be of sin the perfect cure;
Save me, Lord, and make me pure.

Should my tears forever flow,
Should my zeal no languor know,
This, for sin, could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone.
In my hand no price I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling.

When my pilgrimage I close,
Victor o'er the last of foes;
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,—
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.

— *Toplady.*

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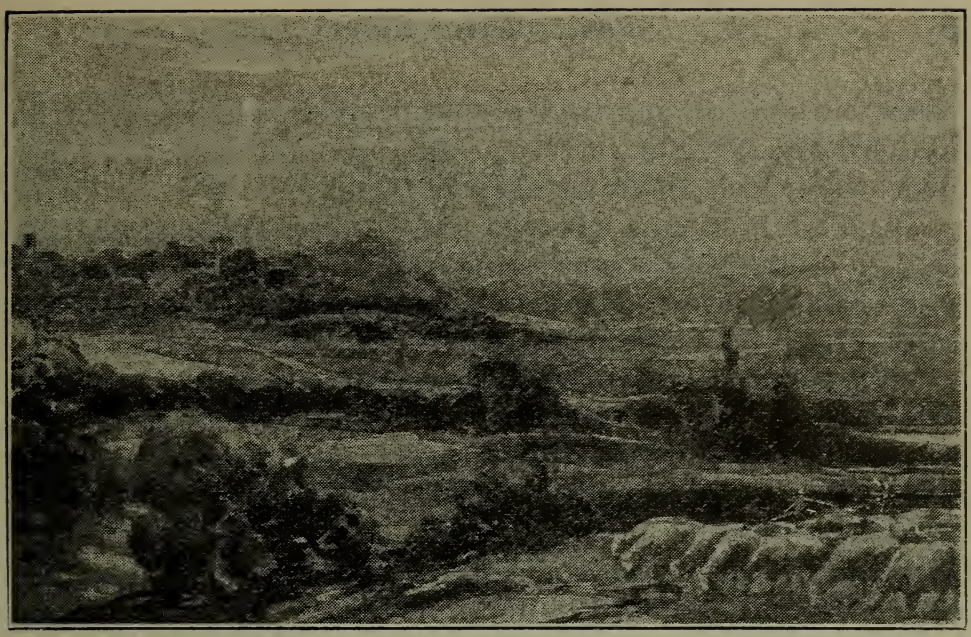
THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:11.



BETHLEHEM

"Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" Matt. 16:3.

CHRIST IS COMING THE SECOND TIME

JESUS is coming again. He came to earth nineteen centuries ago, and after a sojourn of thirty-three years He returned to heaven, where He has been ever since.

But He is coming the second time. He is coming to finish the work He began on His former visit,— the great work of human redemption.

Some nineteen hundred years ago, when "the fulness of the time was come" (Gal. 4:4), Jesus our Lord appeared, and by His life, His ministry, His death, and His resurrection provided the groundwork of human redemption. Having paid the price of human redemption, He was exalted to the right hand of God in heaven, "to give repentance" and the "forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31.

During all the time since then, He has, by His priestly intercession, ministration, and mediation, been applying this redemption to human beings, transforming lives, bringing lost

souls to a rebirth, and thus preparing those who receive Him as Lord and Saviour to become subjects of the eternal kingdom over which He is to reign as King.

And He is coming again to receive these subjects to Himself, to establish His everlasting kingdom, and to reign over it as King forever. His first coming was the sowing of the seed; His second coming is the reaping of the harvest.

When He was here nineteen centuries ago, He spoke of His second coming. He said He would come again. He admonished His disciples to be prepared for His return, He instructed them regarding the time of His return, He commissioned them to preach the message of His second coming, and He encouraged them to look to that event as the consummation of all their hopes.

"I Will Come Again"

In that wonderfully tender, comforting talk with His disciples just before His crucifixion, when He admonished them, "Let not your heart be troubled," and pointed them to His Father's house and the many mansions there, Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I *will come again,* and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:1-3.

In Matthew 25:31 He speaks of the time when "the Son of man shall come in His glory." And in Matthew 26:64, after the high priest at His trial had angrily commanded Him to say whether He was the Christ, He replied, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

And again in Luke 21:25-27, after foretelling signs of His return, He said, "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

Not content with these plain statements, our Saviour reiterated the fact and certainty of His return in the parables He gave. In the parable of the talents, in Matthew 25:14-30, the going away of the Saviour to heaven is indicated by the

man who took his journey into a far country; and the words, "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them," teach the long absence of Jesus from the earth, and His ultimate return to reckon with His servants at the day of judgment. Then again, His return is indicated in the parable of the pounds, in Luke 19:11-27. Here the Lord said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come." The nobleman, representing Jesus, was not only going away, but he intended to return. His servants were to have continually in their minds the thought that it was not his purpose to remain away always, but that at some future time he would again appear. The charge given them was, "Occupy till I come."

"He Shall Appear the Second Time"

After Jesus had completed His earthly ministry and had gone back to heaven, His apostles constantly set forth the fact and certainty of His return the second time to this earth. Paul writes to the Philippians (3:20), "Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour." He writes to the Colossians (3:4), "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory." To the Hebrews (9:27, 28) he wrote, "As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the *second time* without sin unto salvation." And again (10:36, 37), "Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Here Paul is so positive of the return of the Lord the "second time" that he speaks of Him as "He that *shall* come," and says of Him most positively that He "will come."

Peter, too, emphasizes the second coming of our Lord. He speaks of the scoffers of the last days who mockingly inquire, "Where is the promise of His coming?" These scof-

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

"Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." Job 19:27.

fers in their blind unbelief and willing ignorance are able to see no signs of His return, yet Peter assures his readers that "the day of the Lord *will come* as a thief in the night." 2 Peter 3:4, 10.

John, the beloved disciple, also writes often of his Lord's return. "Now, little children, abide in Him; that, when He shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." 1 John 2:28. John is shown the return of the Lord in a vision, and cries out, "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him." Rev. 1:7. Again John represents Jesus as speaking to him, and saying, "Behold, I come quickly." Rev. 22:12.

Truly, Jesus is to return. The Bible so teaches. The certainty of His return is well established. There is, there can be, no doubt about it, for His word cannot fail.

The Purpose of His Return

The Bible not only sets forth the certainty of Christ's return, but it makes plain the purpose of it. Men may do things aimlessly and without purpose; God does not. The second coming of His Son has definite objectives, as did His first coming.

He is coming *to raise the dead.* Those who have died are to be made alive. Those who sleep in their graves are to be awakened. Those who have fallen down in death are to be raised up.

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29.

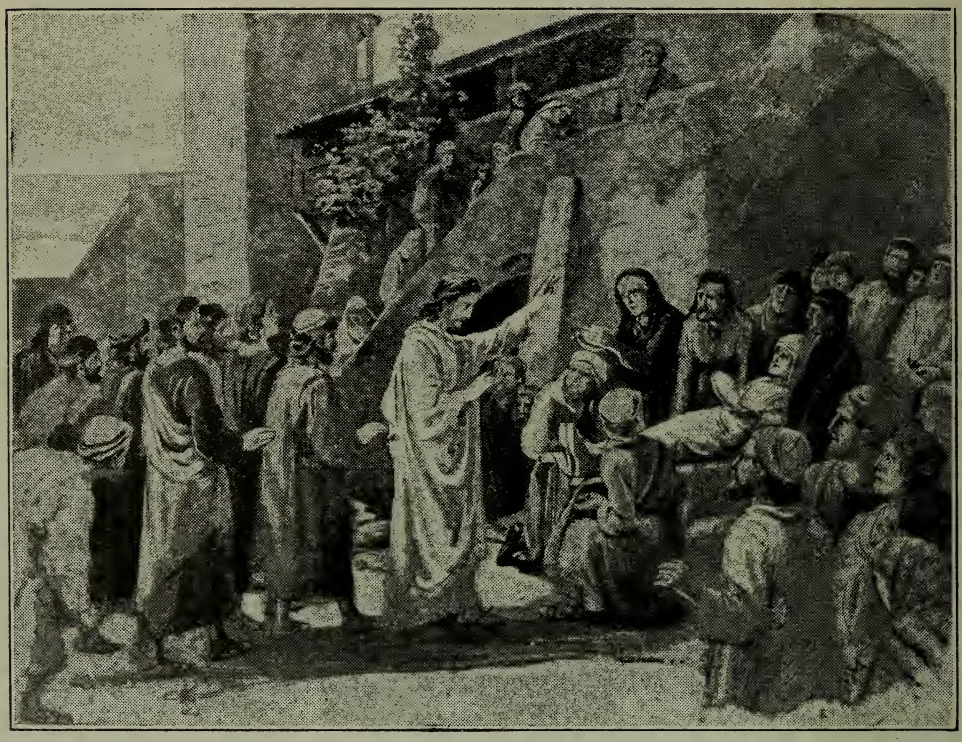
Myriads of the faithful people of God are cold in death. One object of Christ's second coming is that He may raise the blessed dead. They are to be raised at His coming.

"As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." 1 Cor. 15:22, 23.

"The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." 1 Thess. 4:16.

"At that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." Dan. 12: 1, 2.

So it is when "the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity," that the



JESUS RAISING THE SON OF THE WIDOW OF NAIN

"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth." John 5: 28, 29.

earth "shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isa. 26: 21. It is when the trumpet shall sound at the coming of Jesus that the dead saints are to be raised incorruptible, and the living saints shall be "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and be made immortal. 1 Cor. 15: 51-54.

To Judge the World

When Jesus returns, it will be *to judge the world.* There is to be a judgment. The Bible makes that plain.

"The Lord will judge His people." Ps. 135: 14.

"God shall judge the righteous and the wicked." Eccl. 3: 17.

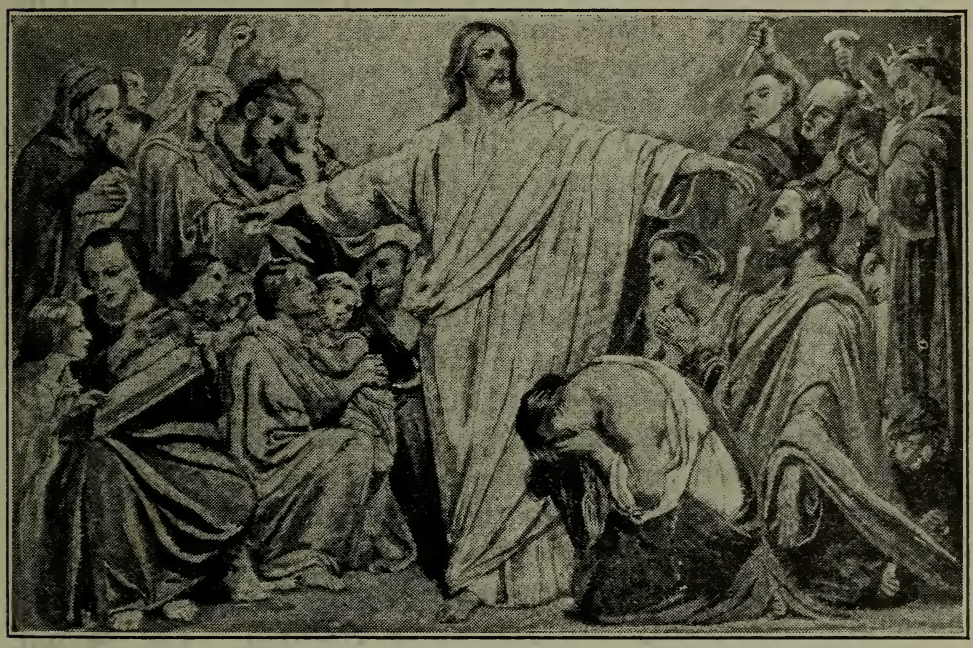
"God shall bring very work into judgment." Eccl. 12: 14.

"We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ." 2 Cor. 5: 10.

"Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 14: 12.

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2: 9.

The time of judgment will be when Jesus comes. To sit as Judge on the throne of eternal justice is one of the ob-



THE LAST JUDGMENT

"Before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another." Matt. 25: 32.

jects of His return. God "hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world." Acts 17: 31. "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." John 12: 48. This "last day" is when Jesus comes. At that time the world will be judged. Then it shall be known whether or not our lives have been lived in vain.

Of Christ's second coming it is said:

"He cometh to judge the earth." Ps. 96: 13.

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. . . . He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people." Ps. 50: 3, 4.

He "shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom." 2 Tim. 4:1.

To Give Rewards

Then, too, when Jesus comes, it will be *to give rewards.* "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Rev. 22:12. It is then that the righteous are to be rewarded for their faithfulness. It is then He will make up His jewels. He will send forth His angels, and they shall gather together His elect. Crowns will be placed on worthy brows, the redeemed will be arrayed in white, made immortal, and will joyfully enter upon their happy existence in God's kingdom, where nothing will ever come to molest, to mar, or to cause unhappiness. The trial of their faith is to "be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:7. It is when the Chief Shepherd shall appear that His people are to receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

To Redeem the Earth

And, lastly, when Jesus comes, it will be *to redeem the earth.* Not only the race, but the earth itself has been lost and is under a curse. God gave it to man at the beginning. Man sold himself and his dominion of the earth to Satan. The earth was subjected to the curse, under which it still groans and travails. It is out of order, torn, tossed, and racked like a sick man. A great malady is upon it. But harmony and beauty are yet to be restored. The second Adam will completely obliterate the works of the first Adam. Christ has purchased the earth. We are now waiting for the "redemption of the purchased possession." Eph. 1:14. When Jesus comes the second time, He will bring the earth back to its former beauty. It will then shine with more than its original glory. For when He comes, then shall take place the "restitution of all things . . . spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets." (See Acts 3:20, 21.)

"We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." 2 Peter 3:13. "The meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace." "The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever." Ps. 37:11, 29.

And in order to fit it for the dwelling-place of His people, the Redeemer will redeem it when He comes again.

The Manner of His Return

The Bible not only makes plain the certainty of Christ's return and the purpose thereof, but also sets forth *the manner of His coming.* His reappearance will be no secret, hidden manifestation. When He comes, He will come *in person,* He will come *literally,* He will come *visibly,* He will come *in the open sight of all the world,* He will come accompanied by a *demonstration of glory and power* never before witnessed on earth.

God poured out His Spirit on the day of Pentecost in a wonderful way; but that was not the return of our Lord. From that first outpouring until now the Spirit has been with true believers; but this is not the second coming of Christ. Jesus has been with His church for these nineteen centuries to aid, to comfort, and to bless, in fulfilment of His gracious promise, "Lo, I am with you alway;" but this is not His oft-predicted return.

The same Jesus who was crucified; the same Jesus who was literally raised from the dead; the same Jesus who said, "Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have" (Luke 24:39); the same Jesus who, in the clear sight of His assembled disciples, was taken bodily up into heaven and received into a cloud,— this same Jesus is to return to earth in the sight of all its inhabitants, and in the same bodily form in which He went away.

When He departed, two angels came and said to His disciples, standing on Olivet, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall *so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.*" Acts 1:11. And Paul, with equal force and positiveness, says, "The Lord *Himself* shall descend from heaven." 1 Thess. 4:16. Not a spirit, but "this same Jesus;" not a dispensation of Providence, but "the Lord Himself."

Revealed in Flaming Fire

The whole heavens will flash with the awful splendor of our Lord's divine presence. "He shall come in His own

glory, and in His Father's, and of the holy angels." Luke 9:26. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven . . . in flaming fire." 2 Thess. 1:7, 8. When He came before, He was a weak babe in Bethlehem's manger; now He will be an all-conquering King. Before He was "despised and rejected of men;" now His lightnings will enlighten the world, and all the earth shall see and tremble. Before He was a sacrifice, and died on Calvary; now He comes as a Judge sitting upon "a great white throne." Before His enemies crowned Him with thorns; now there will be on His head "many crowns," and His friends will "bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all." Before He came in humility and weakness; now He comes in radiant glory exceeding the brightness of the sun, and in the full exercise of all power in heaven and earth.

Down the pathway of the glory-gilded skies the Lord of glory will come, the keys of death and the grave hanging at His side, His head crowned with a halo before which the sun pales, His flowing robes more beautiful than the rainbow. He has gathered the finest clouds of the universe about Him, and with other clouds composed of myriads and myriads of angels, the immortal Conqueror, the eternal King, comes to receive to Himself His own. In a manner entirely befitting Him as Creator, Redeemer, Prophet, Priest, and King, He will be accompanied by a splendid retinue of shining seraphim. These brilliant bands will fill the glory-flashing firmament. How magnificent will be the advancing pageantry of the skies! How sublime will be the Lord Jesus when He "shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels"! 2 Thess. 1:7.

Suddenly and Unexpectedly

He will come *suddenly and unexpectedly.* "In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." Matt. 24:44. When the wicked world is dreaming of pleasure; when the people are all unready; when the false cry of "Peace" is sounding over the earth, He will come. As the blinding glare of lightning from the heavens, so Jesus will come. Matt. 24:27.

"Behold," said our Lord, "I come quickly."

"Not slowly, slowly, like twilight,
Nor like the cold, creeping tide,
Or bark, from its distant offing,
Moving on o'er the waters wide;
But instant! like sudden lightning
In the depths of a tranquil sky,
From west to east, in a moment
The havoc descends from on high.

"The day of the Lord it cometh
When the virgins are all asleep,
And the drunken world is lying
In a slumber yet more deep;
Like the sudden lurch of a vessel,
By night, on a sunken rock,
All earth in a moment reeleth,
And goeth down with a shock."

— *Bonar.*

He Is Coming Quickly

Christ is not only coming *sometime.* That is true, as has been plainly shown. But that is not all the truth. He is coming *soon.* He is coming *quickly.* He is *at the door.* His foot is on the threshold, His hand on the latch. Soon, and suddenly, He will come. Decades will not become centuries, and the centuries run on into millenniums, before we witness the fearful scenes of the end. But quickly, quickly, Jesus will come; speedily, speedily, He will return; soon, soon, He will be here, while men and women are putting far off the evil day, while they are trying to think it cannot come in their lifetime — suddenly, oh, how suddenly, a change will come over the spirit of their dream, and they be awakened by the very voice of the Son of God as it rolls through the earth, speaking life to the righteous dead, but bringing terror and despair to those who are living in their sins.

He Gave Signs

Jesus, when on earth, not only said He would return, but explained how His people might know the time of His return. He foretold the conditions which would prevail just before His second coming; He gave signs which, when they should occur, were to be understood as harbingers of the coming of

THE UNIVERSAL INVITATION

"The Spirit and the bride say, Come. . . . And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17.

the end of all things earthly. He told His people to watch. He gave evidences of the nearing of His coming. And then He said:

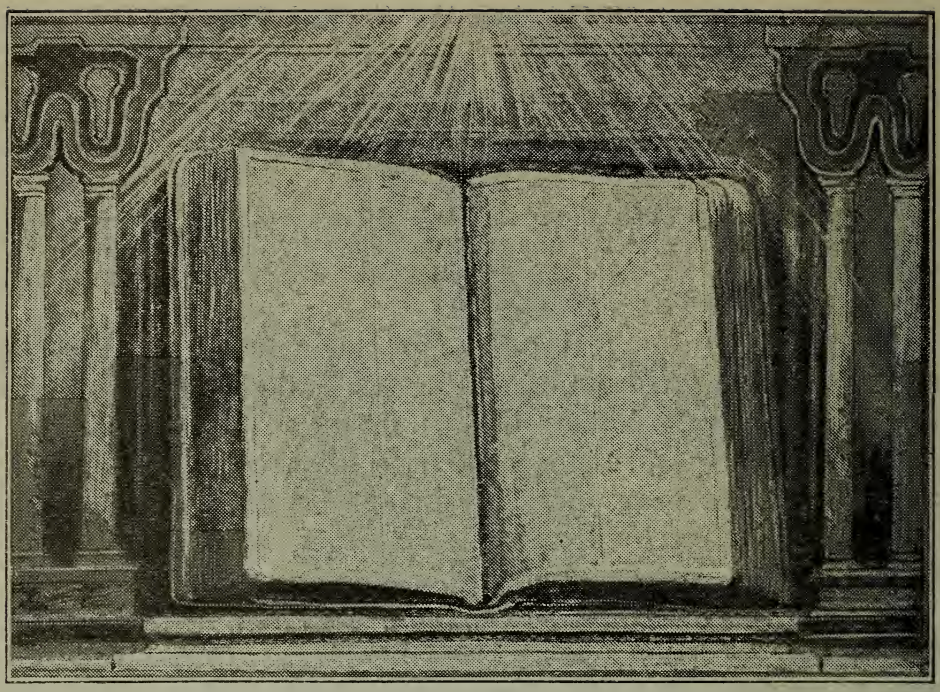
"Now learn a parable of the fig tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24: 32, 33, margin.

Indeed, all through the Word of God there is set forth in the predictions of prophets and apostles the condition of the world and its various activities at the time of the ending of earthly affairs. And the condition of the world now betokens that the end is near. The fulfilment of these divinely inspired prophecies gives reason, as never before, to expect the immediate coming of our long-absent Lord.

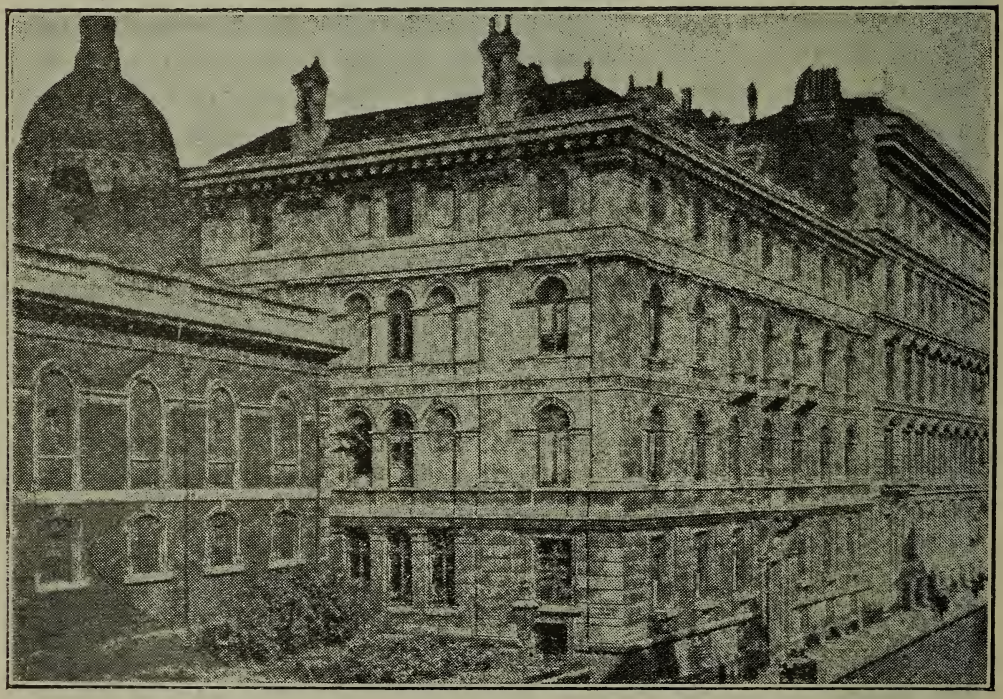
Surely we may know when harvest time has come by noting the condition of the ripening crops. When the full ears of grain hang ripe, the skilled husbandman does not wait long to gather them. None of us by ourselves could know what constitutes a ripeness for the eternal harvest, but this God Himself has revealed. The Lord has shown in His Word what is to be the condition of the world just preceding the time when He is to return. The crop of humanity and of human guilt has been a long time ripening. It is at last where the heavenly Husbandman will delay no longer.

There are evidences all about us, significant evidences, showing that we are truly nearing time's end. We see them in the abounding wickedness; in the coldness and lukewarmness of a formal, lifeless church; in the vast, warlike preparations of the nations; in the alarming increase of crime and lawlessness; in the strange phenomena in the heavens; in the fateful crash of the earthquake's shock; in the unparalleled development of human knowledge; in the growth of false religions; and in the steady advance of "this gospel of the kingdom" into all the earth.

Twelve of the great signs of the return of our Lord are set forth in the following pages. To a candid, careful study of these, and their present significance, we earnestly invite the reader.



THE BIBLE THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE



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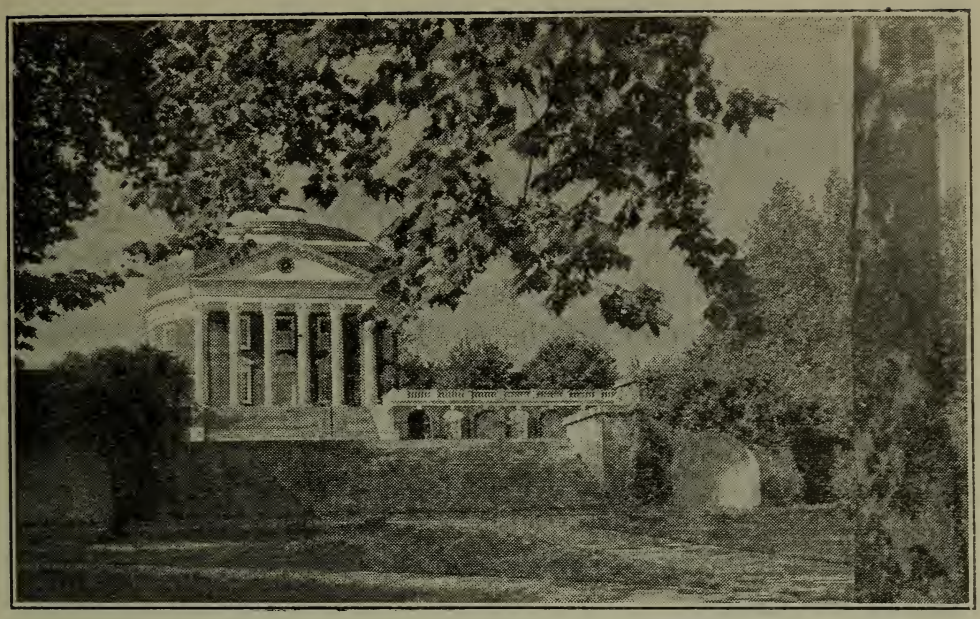


ROTUNDA OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

THE FIRST SIGN — THE INCREASE OF KNOWLEDGE

THERE is no period of human history comparable to the present. Our day is different from every other age of which we have heard or read. All the faculties of the human mind have been sharpened and developed to an astonishing degree during very recent years.

The age in which we live is unique, wonderful. Other ages have equaled it in courage, in feats of valor, in human prowess; but no age can be compared to it in knowledge, invention, transportation, and dissemination of knowledge.

One Hundred Years Ago

Go back a hundred years. We scarcely know how to live. All the comforts and conveniences to which we are so accustomed are gone. There is no telephone or telegraph, and even mail delivery is slow and uncertain. There are no electric cars, no subways, no elevated trains, few steamboats, no aeroplanes, not even a cable car, in fact not a horse car,

and the buggy is the very latest and most up-to-date method of rapid transportation.

There are no electric lights, not even a kerosene lamp. It is the old tallow candle we depend on for light. And we do not need much light, for it is the custom of most people to go to bed soon after the sun goes down.

There are no phonographs in the homes, and radio broadcasting is unthought of.

There is no sewing machine, no reaper, no thresher, no modern farm machinery, no electric sweeper, no electric iron. Housework and farmwork are done by laborious primitive methods.

There are no India-rubber goods. Such conveniences are far in the future.

There are no photographs, no photo-engravings, no cameras, no rotogravure sections of the papers. In fact, there are no newspapers as we know them. Such a thing as the wonderful octuple web perfecting printing press, which prints, pastes, cuts, folds, and counts newspapers at the rate of 96,000 per hour, or 1,600 per minute, is not dreamed of.

There is no planing and woodworking machinery, and therefore none of the endless variety of sashes, doors, blinds, and furniture now common.

There are no gas engines, no elevators, no asphalt pavements or streets, no steam fire engines.

Celluloid articles are unknown. So also are time locks for safes, barbed-wire fences, self-binding harvesters, oil and gas wells, ice machines and cold storage.

There are no stem-winding watches, cash registers, or cash carriers.

There are no iron or steel frame buildings, no iron-clad ships, no revolvers, no magazine guns.

There are no linotype or monotype machines, no typewriters, dynamo-electric machines, electric locomotives, or electric plating.

There is no Pasteurizing or knowledge of its need. There is no knowledge of microbes or disease germs, no sanitary plumbing, and no use of anesthetics in surgery.

There are no soda-water fountains, coal-tar dyes and medicines, no artificial limbs and eyes, no spectroscope.

There is no nitroglycerin, dynamite, or guncotton.

There are no electric fire alarms, Artesian wells, or steam hammers; no hydraulic dredges, electric-storage batteries, or tin-can machines; no air brakes, Bessemer steel, or ocean cables; no enameled ironware, Welsbach gas burners, or gas ranges; no roller mills, patent-process flour, or prepared foods; no shoe machines, circular knitting machines, or Jacquard looms; no patent car couplings, sleeping-cars, or street sweepers; no moving pictures, acetylene gas, or X-ray apparatus; no automobiles, locomotives, or bicycles.

I wonder whether we would know how to live in such a world as that!

The Marvels of Our Time

The wonders and marvels of our age are so common to us that we seldom stop to consider how recently these things have all come into use. It seems almost as if the human race had been in a sleep for nearly sixty centuries, and then a little more than a century ago had been awakened to intense activity. In the realm of science and invention, human ingenuity has done more during the last century than in all the centuries which went before. .

Nearly all the great inventions have come within the memory of living men, and so many of them have been produced that we of this age have ceased to exclaim and wonder, and our attitude is one which leads us to expect anything at all and be surprised at nothing. This has not long been true, however. Our fathers and grandfathers, some of them, believed in their days that human progress had reached its limit. An interesting illustration of this is given in the *Scientific American* of Oct. 16, 1915:

"Some one poring over the old files in the United States Patent Office at Washington the other day, found a letter written in 1833 that illustrates the limitations of the human imagination.

"It was from an old employee of the Patent Office, offering his resignation to the head of the department. His reason was that as everything inventable had been invented, the Patent Office would soon be discontinued, and there would be no further need of his services, or the

Courtesy, American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

WIRELESS PHOTOGRAPH OF PRESIDENT AND MRS. COOLIDGE
CLEVELAND TO NEW YORK, MAY 19, 1924

Courtesy, American Telephone and Telegraph Co.

WIRELESS PHOTOGRAPH OF HIGH LEVEL BRIDGE, CLEVELAND, OHIO

services of any of his fellow clerks. He, therefore, decided to leave before the blow fell."

The World Just One Tenth of a Second Wide

Chief among the amazing developments of the present is radio broadcasting. Millions of people now sit at home with head phones on, or before loud speakers, and twirl little black dials in order to mine the air for something worth while, as men mine the earth for precious metals. Twenty million people in America can sit quietly in their homes and hear the audible voice of one man.

Allan L. Benson, writing in *Hearst's Magazine,* July, 1922, says:

"We may now mine the air as our forefathers mined the earth, finding one thing at one level, and another thing at another.

"You set your radio instrument for a certain wave length, and hear a comic quartet a thousand miles away. You want opera, and feel bored as did your ancestors when they mined for gold and struck gravel.

"You adjust for another wave length, and hear a gentleman perhaps 1,500 miles away, talking about 'Civic Consciousness,' or reading late news dispatches or stock market reports.

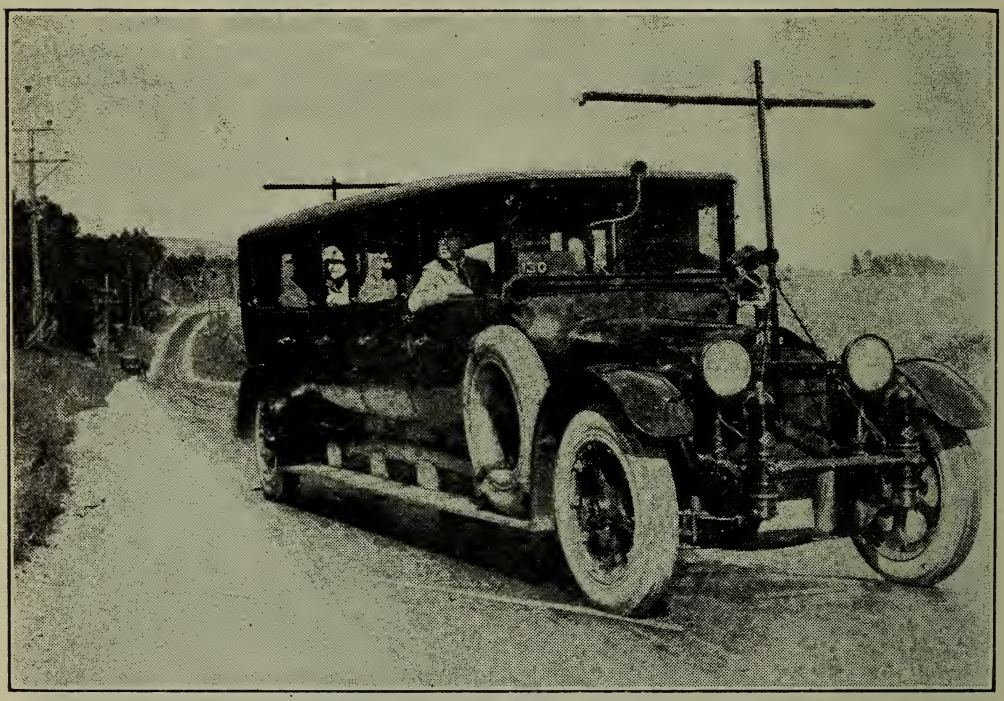
"That makes you feel worse than your gold-mining ancestor felt when he went from gravel to slate, and again you change your adjustment. Behold the miracle! You have sunk your shaft into a ledge of grand opera. There is no mistaking the liquid notes. You relax and listen."

And speaking of the possibilities of this wonderful invention, French Strother, in *World's Work* for April, 1922, writes:

"This world is now just one tenth of a second wide. Wireless has done it. Man has touched the ether waves with the perturbations of his restless spirit, and within the winking of an eye, by man-made receptive nerves, at the antipodes his brothers hear his speech. At last the world is one chamber, where no man, however remote in the flesh from other men, is beyond the sound of the voices of his fellows. If the inventions of present daily use had been in existence in their time, Robinson Crusoe on his lonely island, Columbus in his caravel, Cæsar in Britain, even Dante in the remotest hell, could have heard the gossip of London, the weather report in Genoa, the chariot racing results in Rome, and the voice of the lost Beatrice. As it is, boys in New Jersey are talking to boys in Scotland; milady at her breakfast table is receiving word of the morning's bargains at the emporiums; farmers pause in the furrow to get from the air the market report from New York; farmers' wives at their evening knitting, listen to grand opera in Chicago; trainmen talk to dispatchers many miles away; explorers, a year's travel distant in the antarctic, hear Bordeaux telling Melbourne that the pope in Rome is dead.

Gilliams, N. Y.

"LISTENING IN" AT A HOSPITAL



A MOTOR BUS EQUIPPED WITH RADIO RECEIVING SET

"These things are done by wireless. . . . The art of wireless, on its technical side, is advancing so rapidly that even experts find it impossible to keep abreast of its daily advance. The dreams of twenty years are realized overnight, and the impossibilities of yesterday were accomplished a half hour ago. What may tomorrow be?"

What possibilities are here opened up for the gospel of our Lord! In a way undreamed of hitherto, and independent of weather conditions and transportation facilities, the seed of truth may reach untold millions at the very poles of the world. The burning sands of the Sahara, the frozen steppes of Siberia, the jungle fastnesses of India, the inaccessible gorges of the Himalayas, the serene calm of the mountain shepherd in his hut, as well as the groups of men and women on the far-flung oceans, could be put in touch with Christ's truth instantaneously, for the wireless leaps over all barriers of time and space.

What Do These Things Mean?

It is not my purpose, however, in calling attention to these things, to arouse in the reader merely a sense of wonder, but rather to raise the question, What do these things mean? It is the significance of these wonders which concerns me, and which I would have concern you.

Why is it, then, that these amazing developments, these wonderful time and labor saving devices, have all come in our day? Why is it that they have been crowded into the last century? Here is contained a lesson for all the world. Here is a sign from God Himself.

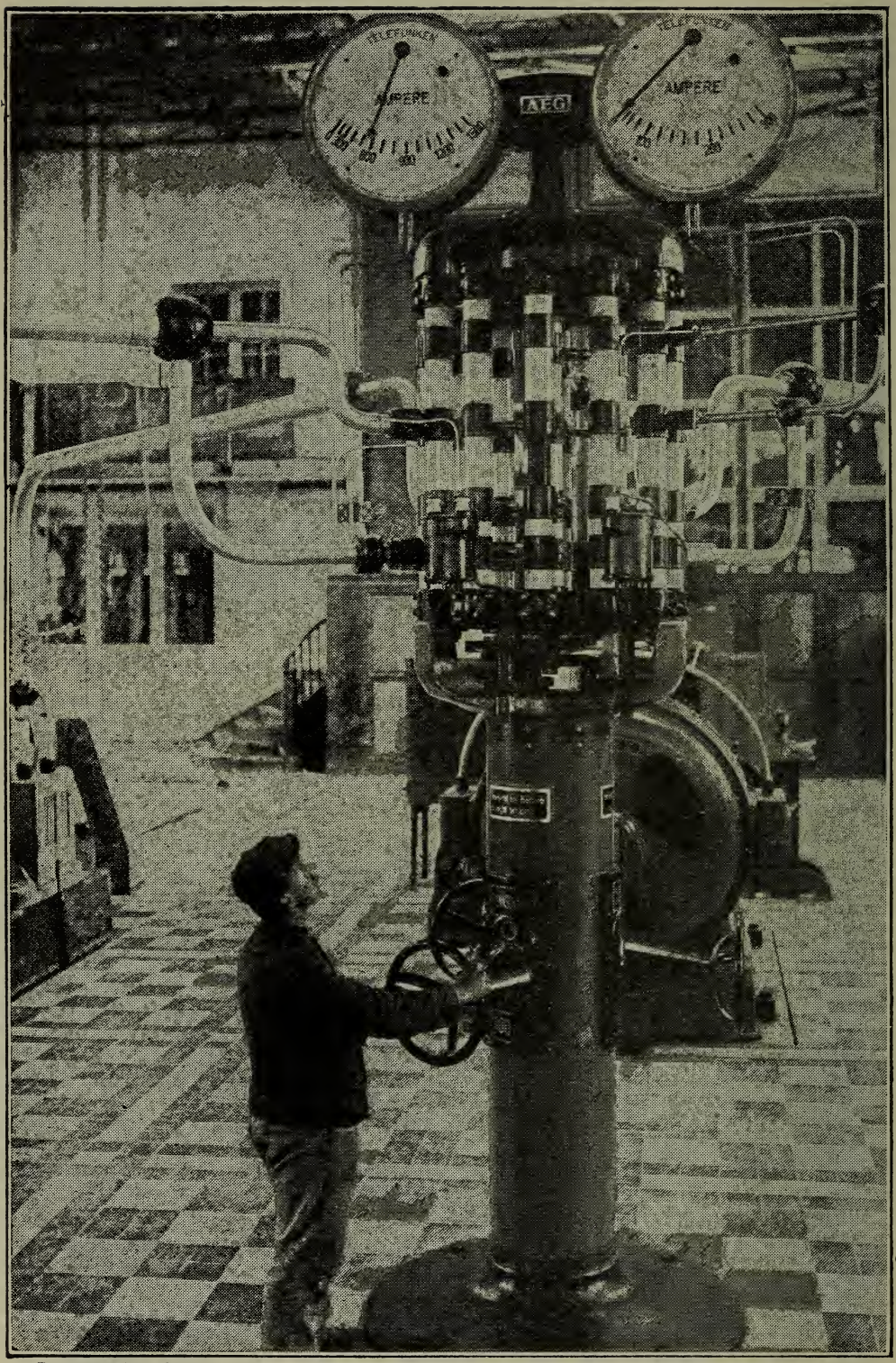
All these marvels have come about in just this way and at just this time as a fulfilment of an ancient Bible prophecy, and they are here for God to use in carrying out His purpose for the earth and the race upon it.

The Time of the End

This is the prophecy:

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Dan. 12: 4.

Here Daniel is instructed to seal his writings until a future time called "the time of the end." In this "time of



International

ONE OF THE APPLIANCES IN THE WORLD'S GREATEST RADIO STATION, NEAR BERLIN, GERMANY

the end" his writings, and, indeed, the great Bible prophecies, would be unsealed, made known, disclosed, and disseminated widely over the earth. For this purpose "knowledge shall be increased," and "many shall run to and fro."

That this is the primary meaning of this prophecy may be seen from a comparison of this passage as it appears in the German and French translations. The German reads:

"And thou, Daniel, hide these words and seal this writing until the last time; then shall many comprehend it and find great understanding."

The French reads:

"But thou, Daniel, close these words and seal the book until the time appointed; at which they shall run through it, and of which the knowledge shall be increased."

"The time of the end" is not the end of time; that is, it is not the end itself; it is a short time preceding the end. It is, as the German translation has it, "the last time." There is to be, just before Jesus returns, a time during which Daniel's prophecy is to be made plain, is to be preached in all the earth, to acquaint men with the importance of the time in which they live, and prepare them to meet their Lord when He comes. This is here called "the time of the end."

This time is to be known by two things: it is to be a time of unprecedented increase of knowledge, and it is to be a time of unparalleled running to and fro.

This increase of knowledge will be primarily knowledge of the Scriptures, and this running to and fro will be primarily for the purpose of disseminating that knowledge. That is, when God's day is about to dawn and His Son is about to come, He will quicken all the faculties of the human mind for the purpose of bringing into use all manner of devices, equipment, and inventions, in order that "this gospel of the kingdom" may be quickly carried to every land and people on the globe.

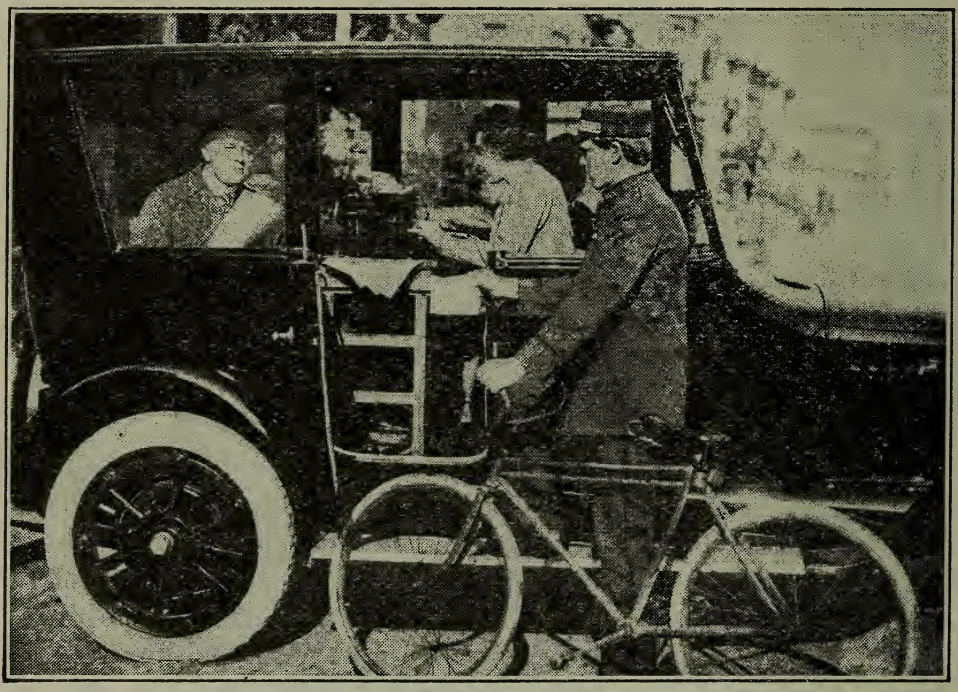
This age of marvels is therefore only the carrying out of the purpose of God. It is all His doing, and He will use it all for His own designs.

And the significance of it is, that this is "*the time of the end;*" this is "*the last time.*"

The Increase of Knowledge

"The time of the end" is to be marked by two chief characteristics,— an unusual increase of knowledge and an extraordinary running to and fro.

This is that time. There never has been such a time as during recent years for development and enlargement of human thought and knowledge. This is evidenced by the marvels of the present age to which we have already referred.



AN AUTOMOBILE BUSINESS OFFICE

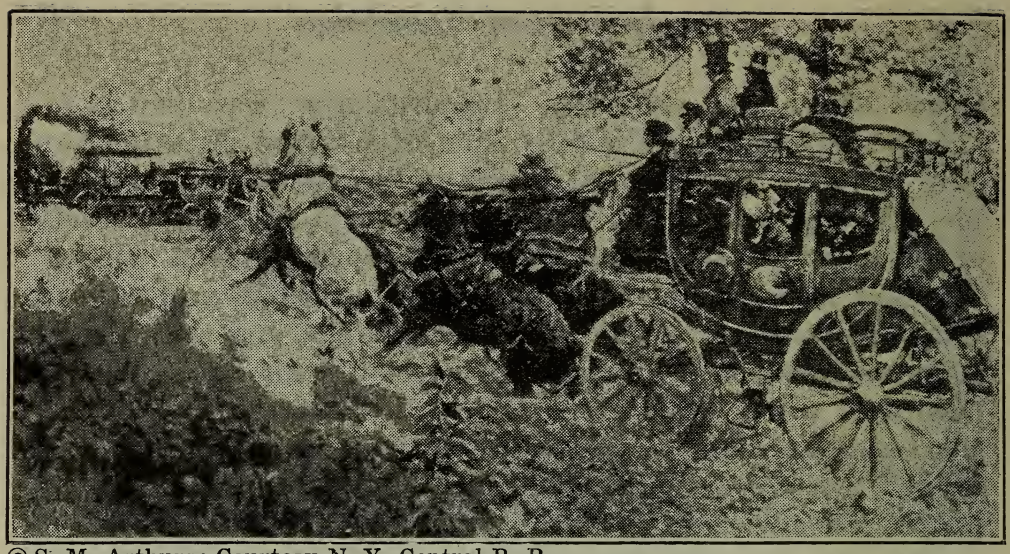
By these we know that the predicted increase of knowledge has come. And by this we know more: we know that the divine prediction has been fulfilled, and we are in "the time of the end."

One further consideration should here be emphasized. This increase of knowledge to take place in "the time of the end," was with special reference to the knowledge of the Scriptures, the prophecies, the Word of God. A little more than a century ago God's Word was little known, because

it was scarce and expensive. Its circulation was limited to a very few, and those usually men of wealth. Printing facilities were needed to put it out in the tongue of the people. A large output was needed to bring it within the reach of the people. Easy and rapid transportation was needed to get it into the hands of the people. Schools and education were needed to put it into the minds and within the comprehension of the people. A special divine message was needed to bring "this gospel of the kingdom" to the attention of the people. And a great mission movement was needed, wielded by, and clothed with, the Spirit of God, to put it into the hearts of the people.

All this has been witnessed during the last century and a quarter. The London Religious Tract Society was organized in 1799; the British and Foreign Bible Society, in 1804; the American Bible Society, in 1816; and the American Tract Society, in 1825. The Bible has been printed in nearly 800 languages and dialects, and nearly 800,000,000 copies of it, in whole or in part, have been distributed over all the earth. Never before has such a good degree of learning been so general as now. Schools, academies, colleges, universities, are everywhere. There are law, scientific, medical, theological, military, commercial, and agricultural schools, and seminaries for the deaf, dumb, and blind. There are continually enlarging means provided for the education of the people.

There is no mistake here. The time pointed forward to by Daniel is the time in which we live. Everything called for by this particular prophecy has been fulfilled. Knowledge has been increased most marvelously. All about us are the evidences. This is one of the great signs of the return of Jesus. This is "the time of the end."



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"THE MEETING OF THE WAYS"

The first regular passenger train in America crossing the path of the stagecoach.

After Painting by Wm. H. Foster
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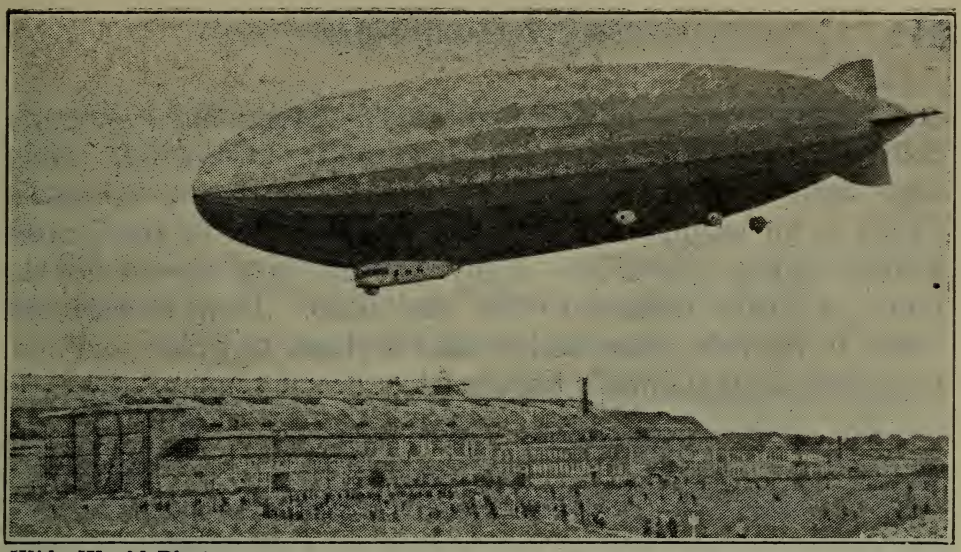
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY LIMITED



Wide World Photos

THE "LOS ANGELES" ON ITS FIRST TRIAL FLIGHT

THE SECOND SIGN—UNPARALLELED RUNNING TO AND FRO

In the prophecy of Daniel a striking sign is given to identify "the time of the end." Daniel reports the angel Gabriel as saying to him:

"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

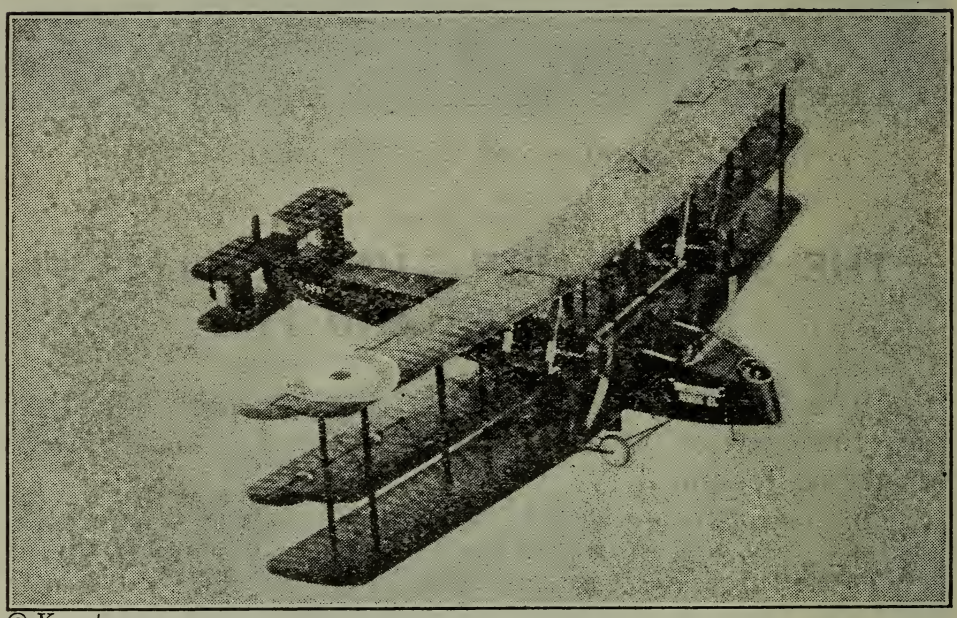
"The time of the end" is, therefore, to be marked by unparalleled running to and fro. Fenton's translation of this verse reads:

"So you, Daniel, conceal the events, and seal the record, until the fixed period, when many will travel and knowledge will be increased."

"The time of the end," then, will be a time when "many will travel."

Here is another great sign that our day is "the time of the end." This is a time of unparalleled travel. Going back and forth over the earth, "to and fro," are countless multitudes of people. Fast as rapid transportation facilities have been developed, they have not been fast enough to

accommodate all who desire to travel. More and ever more railway routes are being surveyed and constructed. More and more steamship lines are being opened and operated. There is an automobile for every five persons in the United States. They crowd the highways and city streets to the point of grave danger to life and limb. How to care for them, to provide space and room for them, to guide and control them in their swift passage, has become one of the most



© Keystone

THE AERIAL LIMOUSINE

puzzling of civic problems. Airplanes roar over our heads, subways rumble under our feet. On the earth, over the earth, under the earth; on the sea, over the sea, and under the sea, myriads are running to and fro, going here and there to all the ends of the world, fulfilling the ancient word spoken twenty-five hundred years ago, and pointing with divine accuracy and infallible precision to this day of ours as "the time of the end," "the last time."

Go to any great railway station, to any steamship terminus, and watch the thousands, the tens of thousands, yes, the hundreds of thousands, coming in, going out, moving here and there, endlessly, night and day, hour after hour,

through the weeks, and months, and years. The whole population of the earth seems to be in ceaseless motion, restlessly going from one place to another, crowding every conveyance, and constantly calling for more speed.

What does it mean? It means that we have reached the time pointed out by God as "the time of the end."

This Is "The Last Time"

This unparalleled running to and fro is a special characteristic of this particular time. Former generations did not travel as we do. Our grandfathers and grandmothers stayed at home. They didn't run about. The whole period of their lives was spent in a narrow area. A few miles from home was the extent of their journeying. To travel a distance of a hundred miles to some large city, or to visit some relative, such a trip as we would take and return from in a day, and think nothing of, to them was an event to be prepared for for months, and to be talked about afterward while life lasted. They were home bodies. Their chief business was building the home. They stayed by it, and never wandered far from it.

Not so with the present generation. Home seems to be considered a place to leave, not to stay. It is just a starting-point for somewhere else; a place to catch one's breath before hurrying to the next place.

Our forebears did not travel as we do. They did not want to. And if they had wanted to, they could not have done so. They had no means of transportation such as we have.

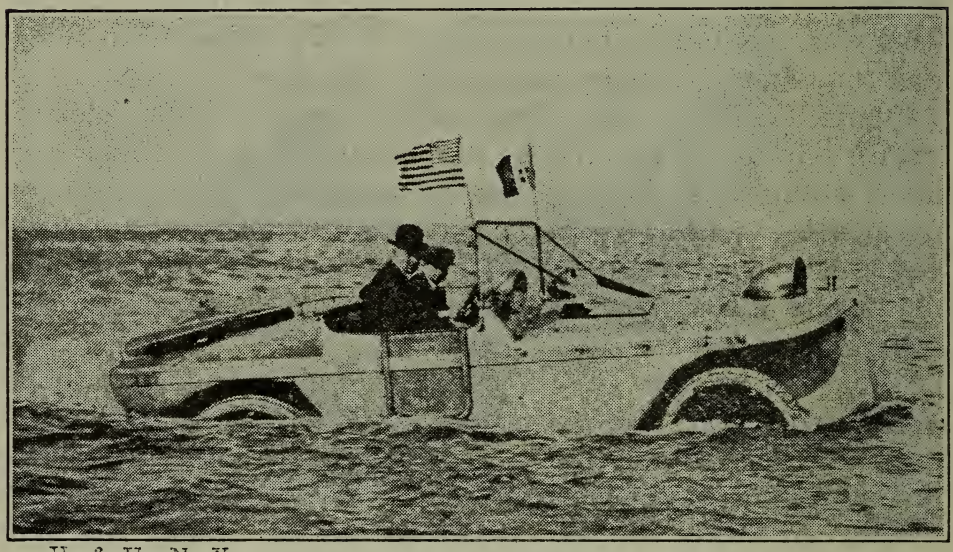
Up to a century and a quarter ago, when men traveled on land they went in the same way, and by the same method, as Abraham journeyed from Ur of the Chaldees to the Land of Promise, on the back of some beast or in some dray or primitive cart pulled by a domesticated animal. For thousands of years no other way of travel had been devised.

The Development of Rapid Transportation

It has been within our own time that rapid transportation has had its astonishing development. We fail to realize the wonder of it because we have grown so accustomed to it.

We look up into the heavens, and see great airships passing from end to end of the continent, or gliding over the thousands of miles of ocean; airplanes that leap across a continent in a single day, or that fly straight up toward heaven until they are beyond the reach of human vision; passenger planes that bind great cities and nations together by regular routes of travel; commercial airships for the transportation of merchandise.

We look on the water, and see gigantic ships with furniture and fittings surpassing the palaces of ancient em-



U. & U., N. Y.

MOTOR CAR ON LAND — SPEEDY BOAT IN WATER

perors, containing people sufficient to populate small cities, and cleaving the waters with amazing speed, binding the continents together as never before.

We look on the earth, and see wonderful trains hurrying here and there, bearing tens of thousands of human beings from city to city, at a rate of speed which would have been incredible a few years ago. We see automobiles by the million, going at a speed scarcely slower than the trains, bearing other multitudes wherever they choose to go.

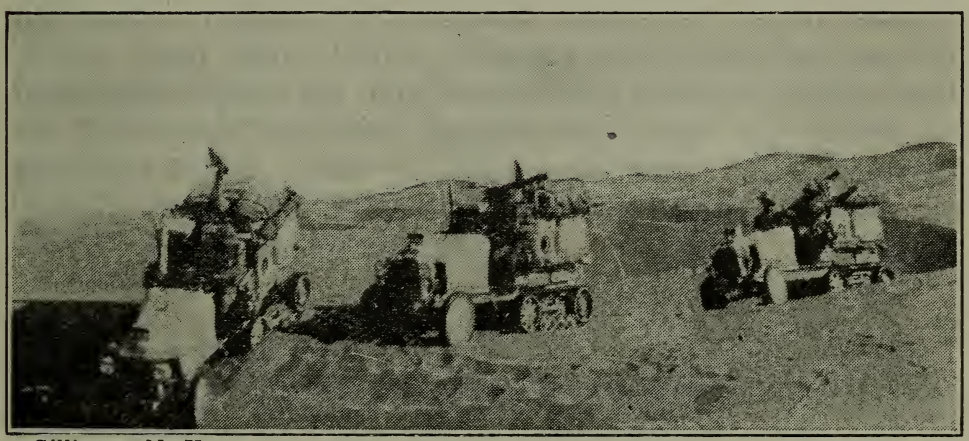
And we know that under great cities in the subways, and under broad rivers in the tubes and tunnels, are other hun-

dreds of thousands hurrying about as are their fellows above them, going away from *here* to get to *there*.

It is all so ordinary, so usual, that our sense of wonder no longer functions. We take it for granted. We are used to it. It seems as if it had always been going on.

Unusual, Extraordinary, Amazing, Wonderful

But, dear friend, it is unusual, it is extraordinary, it is amazing, it is wonderful. There never has been anything like it before. And it has a tremendous meaning, a meaning which you must not miss, which you must not lose, for your very soul. It marks this time; it is a special feature of this



Gilliams, N. Y.

FAMOUS MOTOR EXPEDITION THAT CONQUERED THE SAHARA

time; and this special feature of this time identifies our day with certainty as "the time of the end."

A hundred years ago such a thing as a railroad was unknown and incredible. A member of the New York Legislature in 1817 "came to be regarded as a proper subject for a strait-jacket, because he expressed his belief that steam carriages would be operated successfully on land."

In 1825 Mr. Nicholas Wood, in his work on railways, said:

"Nothing could do more harm toward the adoption of railways than the promulgation of such nonsense, as that we shall see locomotives traveling at the rate of twelve, sixteen, eighteen, and twenty miles an hour."

In 1828 a debating society made a request of the school board in Lancaster, Ohio, for the use of the schoolhouse for the discussion of the question as to whether or not railroads were practical. The request was denied, and the following reasons were given by the board:

"You are welcome to use the schoolhouse to debate all proper questions in, but such things as railroads and telegraphs are impossibilities and rank infidelity. There is nothing in the Word of God about them. If God had designed that His intelligent creatures should travel at the frightful speed of fifteen miles an hour, by steam, He would have clearly foretold it through His holy prophets. It is a device of Satan to lead immortal souls down to hell."

And then, when the earliest railways were started in America, their passengers endured experiences almost unbelievable to us. A search through the annals of American railroading reveals that a slight rainfall would make a locomotive take to cover; that sparks from the smokestack would set fire to the train; that engines would be abandoned for the night; that oftentimes teams of horses would be called on, when the engine gave out, to drag the passengers to their destination.

The First Steam Locomotives

It was in January, 1829, that the first steam locomotive, named the "America," was delivered in the United States. It was made in England. It was tried on a sixteen-mile line from Carbondale to Honesdale, Pa. It was not a success. The first practical steam locomotive to run in America, also made in England, and given the name of the "Stourbridge Lion," was used in service on the same line on Aug. 9, 1829.

The first American-built locomotive was the "Best Friend," built at the West Point foundry in New York in 1830. It was used in service on the South Carolina Railroad in that year. It is said to have hauled about forty people in four or five cars at a speed of from sixteen to twenty-one miles an hour. Several months after it had been in service, its engineer, irritated by the sound of escaping steam, fastened down the safety valve, which resulted in a terrific explosion that blew the engine to pieces.

In 1831 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad offered a prize of $4,000 for an American engine to weigh three and one-half tons, capable of drawing fifteen tons at fifteen miles an hour on the level. This was won the next year by Messrs. Davis and Gartner, who constructed the engine "York." In the same year Matthias W. Baldwin, founder of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, built his first locomotive, and tried it on the Philadelphia, Germantown, and Morristown Railroad.

This engine called forth what is said to be the first railroad advertisement ever published in America. It appeared in a Philadelphia paper, and read:

"NOTICE! The locomotive engine (built by M. W. Baldwin of this city) will depart *daily* when the weather is fair, with a train of passenger cars. In bad weather horse cars will run on the same schedule."

The first railway train which ever ran was used on the road from Liverpool to Manchester, England. This was called the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. It printed a document called "Rules for Travelers," and posted copies on its right of way. A perusal of it will give some idea how far railroading has advanced during the last century. It reads.

"COPY OF THE RULES FOR TRAVELERS ON THE FIRST RAILWAY

"1. Any person desiring to travel from Liverpool to Manchester, or vice versa, or any portion of the journey thereof, must, 24 hours beforehand, make application to the station agent at the place of departure, giving his name, address, place of birth, age, occupation, and reason for desiring to travel.

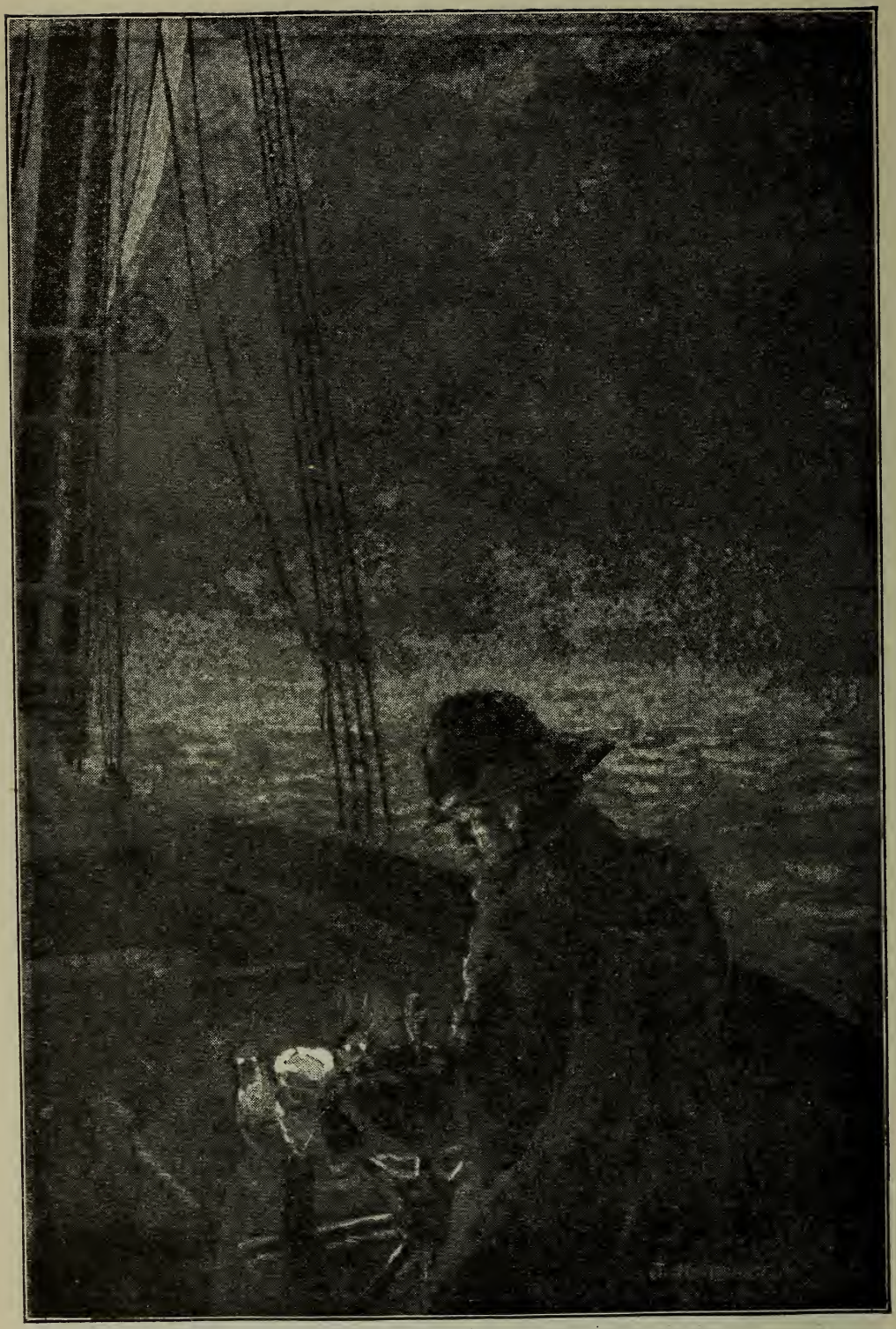
"2. The station agent, upon insuring himself that the applicant desires to travel for a just and lawful cause, shall thereupon issue a ticket to the applicant, who shall travel by the train named thereon.

"3. Trains will start at their point of departure as near schedule time as possible, but the Company do not guarantee when they will reach their destination.

"4. Trains not reaching their destination before dark will put up at one of the several stopping places along the route, for the night, and passengers must pay and provide for their own lodging during the night.

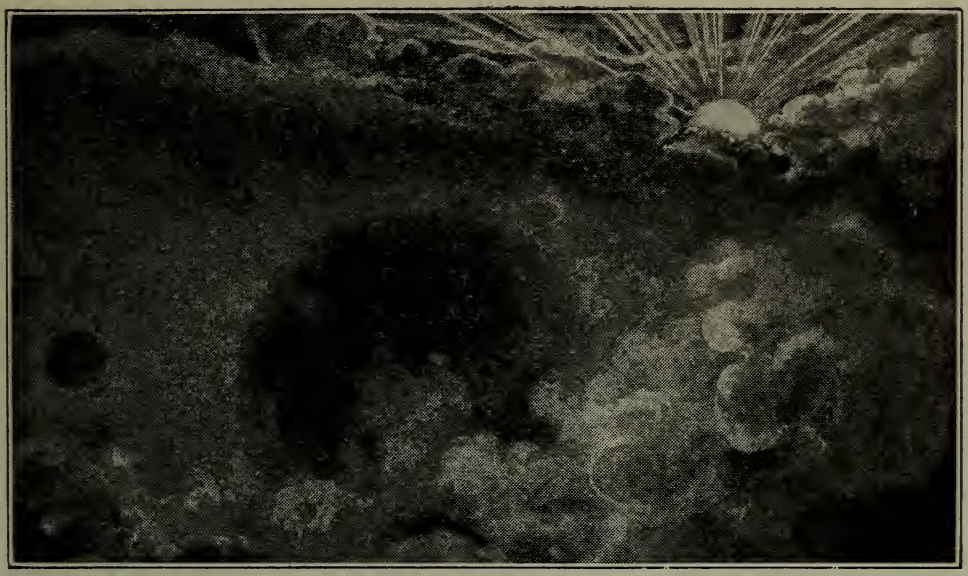
"5. Luggage will be carried on the roof of the carriages. If such baggage gets wet, the Company will not be responsible for any loss attaching thereto."

In the things that meet our eyes all about us, wherever we go, in the street car, automobile, boat, or train, are evidences, unmistakable evidences, of the nearness of our Lord's return. Do not miss the lesson in these signs of the times. This is "the time of the end."



THE DARK DAY AT SEA

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened." Matt. 24:29.



MAY 19, 1780

"When ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." Matt. 24:33.

THE THIRD SIGN — THE DARK DAY

After pronouncing terrible woes on the scribes and Pharisees because of their hypocrisy and their rejection of His message and mission, our Lord cried out:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Matt. 23:37.

As a consequence of Jerusalem's refusal to accept Him, He pronounced this judgment:

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Verses 38, 39.

Then passing out through the court of the temple with His disciples, He went to the Mount of Olives, where the disciples, troubled at His prediction of the desolation of Jerusalem, and curious regarding His own second coming, asked Him the questions:

"When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matt. 24:3.

Replying to this question, Jesus gave them the evidences of the impending destruction of Jerusalem; and then, ad-

dressing Himself to their inquiry regarding the signs of His return, He definitely foretold two special signs which were to take place, saying,

"When ye shall see all these things, know that He is near, even at the doors." Verse 33, margin.

These special signs are thus described:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days *shall the sun be darkened,* . . . and *the stars shall fall from heaven.*" Verse 29.

The Darkening of the Sun

Taking these two signs in their order for separate discussion, attention is directed to the fact that one of the chief signs of the return of Jesus is a darkening of the sun, or a dark day.

Such a sign is spoken of, not alone by Jesus, but by His servants the prophets. Thus we find Joel, in his prophecy of the last days, predicting that "the sun and the moon shall be dark." Joel 2:10. Isaiah, also, in speaking of the coming "day of the Lord," says: "The sun shall be darkened in his going forth." Isa. 13:9, 10. Joel repeats this prophecy when he, too, speaks of "the day of the Lord," saying: "The sun and the moon shall be darkened." Joel 3:15. Peter, upon the day of Pentecost, says: "The sun shall be turned into darkness . . . before that great and notable day of the Lord come." Acts 2:20. John the revelator, too, foretells the same sign just before the great day of the wrath of God, saying: "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair." Rev. 6:12.

Here, then, is a notable sign, mentioned again and again, which, when it occurs, is to be taken as a sure evidence of the nearness of the second coming of Christ. In fact, when it takes place, men are to "know that He is near, even at the door."

Within a Limited Period

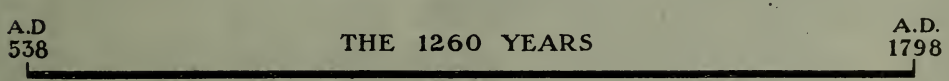
To safeguard the identity of the particular dark day which is to constitute this sign, and to prevent it from being confused with any other dark day, the Lord located its occurrence within a very definite period of years.

In our Lord's own prophecy, as recorded by Matthew, the dark day which was to be a sign of His second coming was to come "immediately after the tribulation of those days." Matt. 24:29. The tribulation here referred to is the persecution of the saints of God by a false religious power, which, beginning in the Dark Ages, was brought to an end as a result of the establishment of the principles espoused by the Protestant Reformation, the tribulation having practically ceased by 1776 A. D. "Immediately after" that, the sign of the dark day was to take place.

The record Mark gives of this same prophecy of our Lord still further limits the time of the occurrence of the dark day, and makes its certain identification still easier. Mark reports Jesus as saying: "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened." Mark 13:24.

Between 1776 and 1798

The tribulation was ended approximately by 1776. The "days" mentioned are the days assigned by the prophet Daniel for the supremacy of the Papacy, 1260 in number,

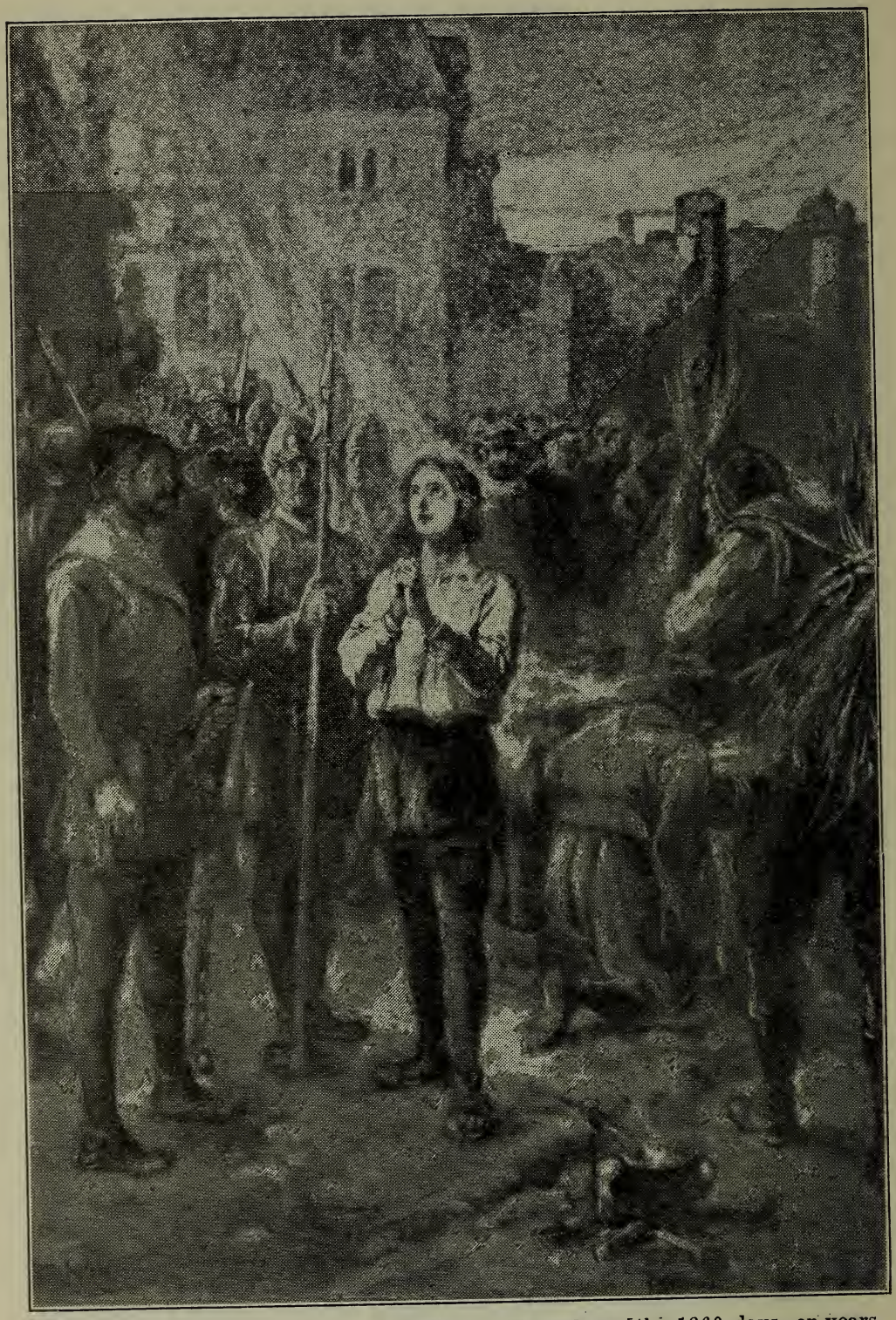


reaching from 538 A. D. to 1798. The sign of the dark day was to take place "in those days," that is, before 1798, but "after that tribulation," that is, after 1776.

Within a short period of 22 years, so accurate are the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures, we are to look for, and find, that particular dark day which the Lord would have us accept as one of the chief signs of the nearness of His return to this earth.

How exact and marvelous are the Lord's foretellings! There is, there can be, no mistake here. Between the years 1776 and 1798 there was to occur a darkening of the sun which was to constitute a sign of the nearness of the end of the world.

Has the prophecy been fulfilled? Did the predicted dark day take place? It has, and it did.



WILLIAM HUNTER BURNED AT THE STAKE

"Except those days [the 1260 days, or years, of persecution] should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved." Matt. 24:22.

May 19, 1780

Read the testimony of an eyewitness, a Harvard professor:

"The *time* of this extraordinary darkness was May 19, 1780. It came on between the hours of 10 and 11 A. M., and continued until the middle of the next night, but with different appearance at different places.

"As to the *manner* of its approach, it seemed to appear first of all in the southwest. The wind came from that quarter, and the darkness appeared to come on with the clouds that came in that direction.

"The *degree* to which the darkness arose was different in different places. In most parts of the country it was so great that people were unable to read common print, determine the time of day by their clocks or watches, dine, or manage their domestic business, without the light of candles. In some places the darkness was so great that persons could not see to read common print in the open air, for several hours together; but I believe this was not generally the case.

"The *extent* of this darkness was very remarkable. Our intelligence in this respect is not so particular as I could wish; but from the accounts that have been received, it seems to have extended all over the New England States. It was observed as far east as Falmouth [Portland, Maine]. To the westward we hear of its reaching to the farthest parts of Connecticut, and Albany. To the southward it was observed all along the seacoasts, and to the north as far as our settlements extend. It is probable that it extended much beyond these limits in some directions. . . .

"With regard to its duration, it continued in this place at least fourteen hours; but it is probable that this was not exactly the same in different parts of the country.

"The *appearance* and *effects* were such as tended to make the prospect extremely dull and gloomy. Candles were lighted up in the houses; the birds, having sung their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent; the fowls retired to roost; the cocks were crowing all around, as at break of day; objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance; and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night."—*Samuel Williams, A. M., Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy in the University of Cambridge, Mass., in "Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," to the close of 1783, Vol. I, pp. 234, 235.*

The True Cause Not Known

The true cause of this phenomenon is not known. This is admitted:

"The Dark Day, May 19, 1780, so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day extending over all New England. In some places, persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. Birds sang their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barnyard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration began about ten o'clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the southwest and

the northeast. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known."—*Noah Webster's Dictionary (edition 1869), under Explanatory and Pronouncing Vocabulary of Noted Names of Fiction, etc.*

"On the 19th of May, 1780, an uncommon darkness took place all over New England, and extended to Canada. It continued about fourteen hours, or from ten o'clock in the morning till midnight. The darkness was so great that people were unable to read common print, or tell the time of the day by their watches, or to dine, or transact their ordinary business without the light of candles. They became dull and gloomy, and some were excessively frightened. The fowls retired to their roosts. Objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance, and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night.

"The causes of these phenomena are unknown. They certainly were not the result of eclipses."—*"The Guide to Knowledge, or Repertory of Facts," edited by Robert Sears, p. 428.*

Whittier Wrote of It

The dark day was such an important event in New England that it was commemorated in one of the poems of Whittier, who wrote:

"'Twas on a May day of the far old year
Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell
Over the bloom and sweet life of the spring,
Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,
A horror of great darkness. . . .

"Men prayed, and women wept; all ears grew sharp
To hear the doom blast of the trumpet shatter
The black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ
Might look upon the rent clouds, not as He looked
A loving guest at Bethany, but stern
As Justice and inexorable Law."

—*"Abraham Davenport."*

The People Believed It to Be a Sign

Upon the people of that time the effect created by the darkening of the sun in this unaccountable manner was to convince them that the end of the world was near. Concerning this we have this record:

"Hosts of people believed the end of the world had begun to come; men dropped to their knees to pray in the field; many ran to their neighbors to confess wrongs and ask forgiveness; multitudes rushed into the meeting houses in towns where they had such, where pious and aged ministers, pleading repentance, interceded with God in their behalf; and everywhere throughout this day of wonder and alarm, the once careless thought of their sins and their Maker! . . .

"The darkness somewhat increased all day, and before time of sunset, was so intense that no object whatever could be distinguished. Anxiously and tremblingly, people waited for the full moon to rise at nine o'clock, and even little children with strained eyes, sat silently watching for its beautiful beams to appear. But they were disappointed, the

darkness being unaffected by the moon. The most feeling prayers ever prayed in Antrim were at the family altars that night. Children never had more tender blessing than these mothers gave them that night. They slept soundly for the most part, but the parents chiefly sat up all night to wait and see if the glorious sun would rise again. Never dawned a lovelier morning than that 20th of May! Never were hearts more thankful on the earth! Even thoughtless people praised God!

"So much were the whole population affected by this event, that, at the succeeding March meeting, the town voted, March 9, 1781, to keep the next 19th of May as a day of fasting and prayer."—*"History of the Town of Antrim, New Hampshire," Rev. W. R. Cochrane, pp. 58, 59.*

Filled with Awe and Alarm

The occurrence of the sign filled the people with awe and alarm. One writer says:

"Men, ordinarily cool, were filled with awe and alarm. Excitable people believed the end of the world had come; some ran about saying the day of judgment was at hand; the wicked hurried to their neighbors to confess wrongs and ask forgiveness; the superstitious dropped on their knees to pray in the fields, or rushed into meeting houses to call on God to preserve them."—*"History of Weare, New Hampshire," 1735-1888, Wm. Little, Lowell, Mass., p. 276.*

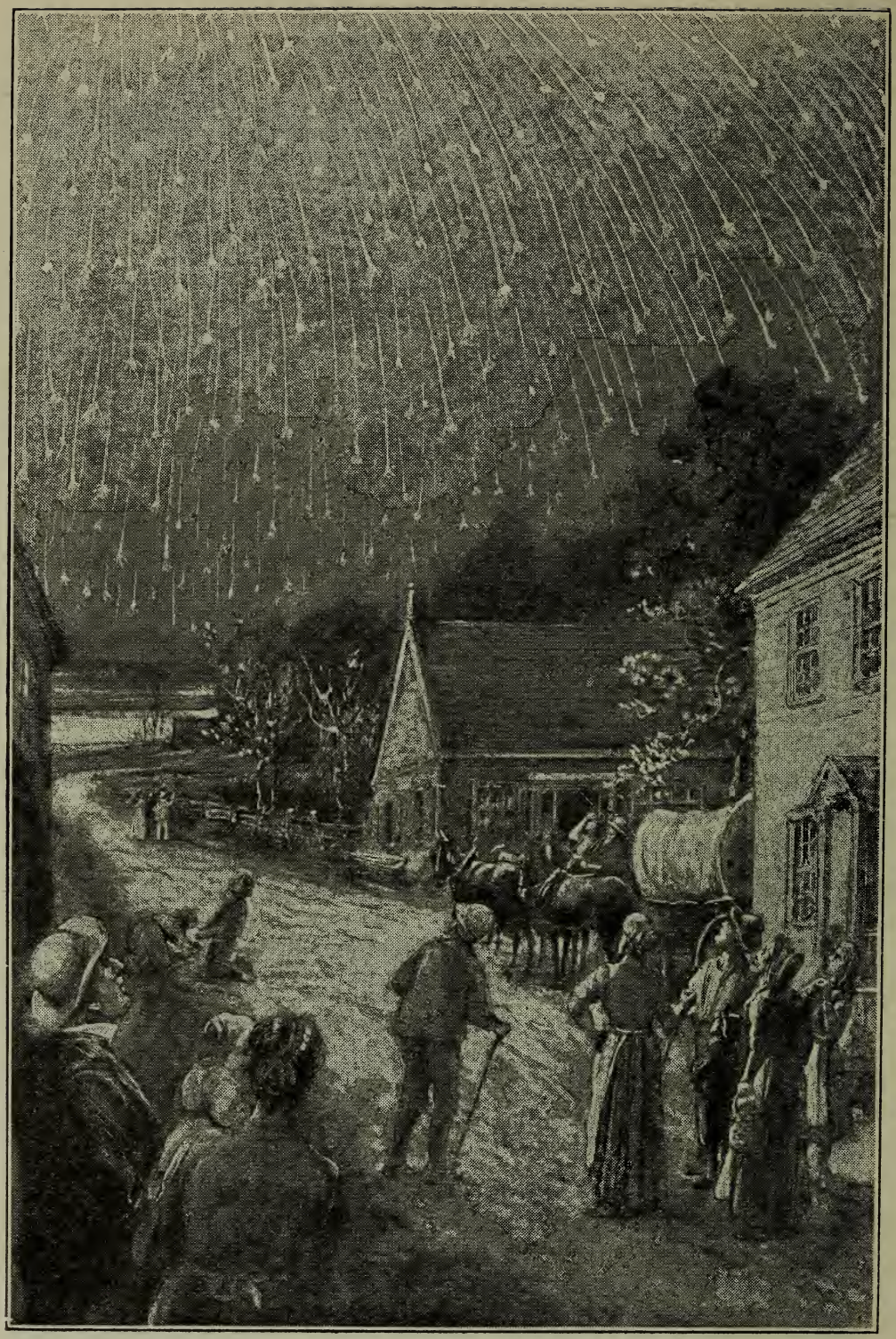
A Profound Impression of Impending Judgment

A profound impression of the nearness of the judgment was a feature of this occurrence. Regarding this another writer says:

"Dr. Nathanael Whittaker, pastor of the Tabernacle church in Salem, held religious services in the meeting house, and preached a sermon in which he maintained that the darkness was supernatural. Congregations came together in many other places. The texts for the extemporaneous sermons were invariably those that seemed to indicate that the darkness was consonant with Scriptural prophecy. Such texts as these were used: Isa. 13: 10; Eze. 32: 7, 8; Joel 2: 31; Matt. 24: 29, 30; Rev. 6: 12.

"Devout fathers gathered their families around them in their homes, and conducted religious services; and for a few hours Christians were stirred to activity, and nonprofessors earnestly sought for salvation, expecting 'to hear the thunder of the wrath of God break from the hollow trumpet of the cloud.'"—*"The Essex Antiquarian," Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 53, 54, Salem, Mass., April, 1899.*

Thus nearly a century and a half ago one of the greatest and earliest of the signs of the return of Jesus was fulfilled, and fulfilled at the exact time pointed forward to by our Lord Himself. And from that day to this, during all the intervening time, the years have been crowded with evidences that time is hurrying to its close and the Saviour is about to appear.



THE FALLING STARS
NOV. 13, 1833

"The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6:13.

A STAR THE SIGN OF THE FIRST ADVENT

"The star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was." Matt. 2:9.

THE FOURTH SIGN — THE FALLING OF THE STARS

COUPLED with the dark day of May 19, 1780, in the prophecy of our Lord concerning His second coming, is another great sign. Jesus said:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, . . . and *the stars shall fall from heaven.*" Matt. 24:29.

Another Bible writer records it thus:

"The stars of heaven shall fall." Mark 13:25.

John, in vision, is given this view of it:

"The stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Rev. 6:13.

November 13, 1833

It being mentioned in the prophecy of our Lord after He speaks of the darkening of the sun, we should, of course, seek for the occurrence of this sign after the dark day. Fifty-three years after the dark day, on the morning of Nov.

13, 1833, we locate the most striking meteoric shower of all recorded history, and in this we see the sign given us by Jesus Himself to indicate the nearness of the time of His return.

A Yale professor thus describes this majestic occurrence:

"The morning of November 13, 1833, was rendered memorable by an exhibition of the phenomenon called shooting stars, which was probably more extensive and magnificent than any similar one hitherto recorded. . . . Probably no celestial phenomenon has ever occurred in this country, since its first settlement, which was viewed with so much admiration and delight by one class of spectators, or with so much astonishment and fear by another class. For some time after the occurrence, the 'meteoric phenomenon' was the principal topic of conversation in every circle."—*Denison Olmsted, Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy in Yale College, in the American Journal of Science and Arts, Vol. XXV (1834), pp. 363, 364.*

In his "Astronomy for Everybody," page 280, Prof. Simon Newcomb, LL. D., in comparing this meteoric shower with others, declares it to be "the most remarkable one ever observed."

Seen Over Wide Areas

This falling of the stars was seen over wide areas, throughout the United States and other countries. An observer in Missouri writes of it:

"Though there was no moon, when we first beheld them, their brilliancy was so great that we could, at times, read common-sized print without much difficulty, and the light which they afforded was much whiter than that of the moon, in the clearest and coldest night, when the ground is covered with snow. The air itself, the face of the earth, as far as we could behold it,—all the surrounding objects, and the very countenances of men, wore the aspect and hue of death, occasioned by the continued, pallid glare of these countless meteors, which in all their grandeur flamed 'lawless through the sky.' There was a grand, peculiar, and indescribable gloom on all around, an awe-inspiring sublimity on all above: while

> 'the sanguine flood
> Rolled a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven,
> And Nature's self did seem to totter on the brink of time!'

". . . There was scarcely a space in the firmament which was not filled at every instant with these falling stars, nor on it, could you in general perceive any particular difference in appearance; still at times they would shower down in groups — calling to mind the 'fig tree casting her untimely figs when shaken by a mighty wind.'"—*Letter from Bowling Green, Missouri, to Professor Silliman, in the American Journal of Arts and Sciences, Vol. XXV (1834), p. 382.*

Exactly Described in the Bible

A London scientist pointed out its similarity to the prophetic picture of a fig tree casting its untimely figs:

"In many districts, the mass of the population were terror-struck, and the more enlightened were awed at contemplating so vivid a picture of the Apocalyptic image — that of the stars of heaven falling to the earth, even as a fig tree casting her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind."—"*The Gallery of Nature,*" *Rev. Thomas Milner, F. R. G. S., p. 140.*

A writer on astronomy speaks of it in a striking description as a "tempest of falling stars." He says:

"On the night of November 12-13, 1833, a tempest of falling stars broke over the earth. North America bore the brunt of its pelting. From the Gulf of Mexico to Halifax, until daylight with some difficulty put an end to the display, the sky was scored in every direction with shining tracks and illuminated with majestic fireballs."—"*History of Astronomy in the Nineteenth Century,*" *Agnes M. Clerke, p. 328.*

Seen in Other Countries

The display was seen in Mexico and the West Indies as well as in the United States. One writer says:

"The year 1833 is memorable for the most magnificent display [of falling meteors] on record. This was on the same night of November [13] also, and was visible over all the United States, and over a part of Mexico, and the West India Islands. Together with the smaller shooting stars, which fell like snowflakes, and produced phosphorescent lines along their course, there were intermingled large fireballs, which darted forth at intervals, describing in a few seconds an arc of 30 or 40 degrees. . . .

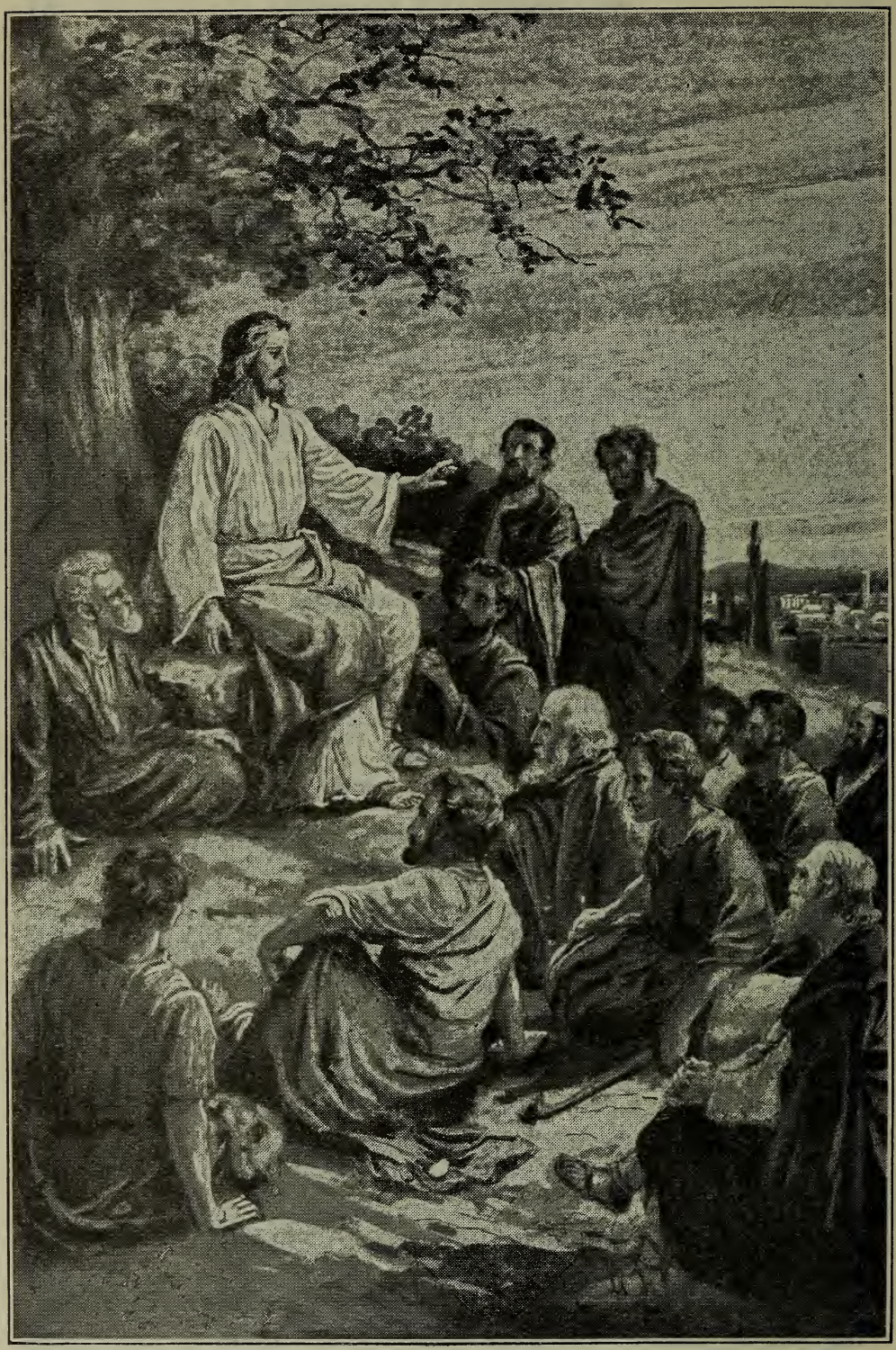
"At Niagara the exhibition was especially brilliant, and probably no spectacle so terribly grand and sublime was ever before beheld by man as that of the firmament descending in fiery torrents over the dark and roaring cataract."—"*The American Cyclopedia,*" *art.* "*Meteors.*"

Accepted as a Sign

And this, too, was accepted by those who witnessed it, as a sign of the Lord's coming, a forerunner of the last day.

"We pronounce the raining fire which we saw on Wednesday morning last an awful type, a sure forerunner, a merciful sign, of that great and dreadful day which the inhabitants of the earth will witness when the sixth seal shall be opened."—"*The Old Countryman,*" *New York, printed in the New York Star and quoted in the Portland Evening Advertiser, Nov. 26, 1833.*

In His mercy the Lord gave these signs that His believing people might have hope. He wanted them to know that He was superintending the affairs of the universe, and bring-



JESUS TELLING HIS DISCIPLES
OF HIS SECOND COMING

"When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21:28.

ing His plans to fruition. These signs, too, as they occurred, were to act as great incentives to the progress of the message of His second coming, and were calculated to bring comfort to His expectant people. The word of the Lord is:

"When these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21: 28.

So let the believer be filled with hope. One writer has said:

"If a Christian lives under the power of this glorious hope, he will just as certainly be purified by it as the linen is to whiten out under the rays of the sun. You may say that it is too distant and mysterious an idea to affect us very strongly. But it is what we contemplate that influences us most powerfully, not what we see and handle merely. 'As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.'"

In the Bible, Christians are spoken of as "those that love His appearing." That which we love has an effect upon us to change us. We become like that which we love. If the object of our desire is sordid, our thoughts will become cheap and low and sordid. If it is an elevated object of desire, it will just as certainly elevate and exalt our affections. It is said of Michael Angelo that by perpetual looking up to the wonderful frescoes on which he worked in the domes of churches, he acquired a fixed upward gaze which he never overcame. As he passed along the street, he gave the impression that he was always contemplating something in the sky.

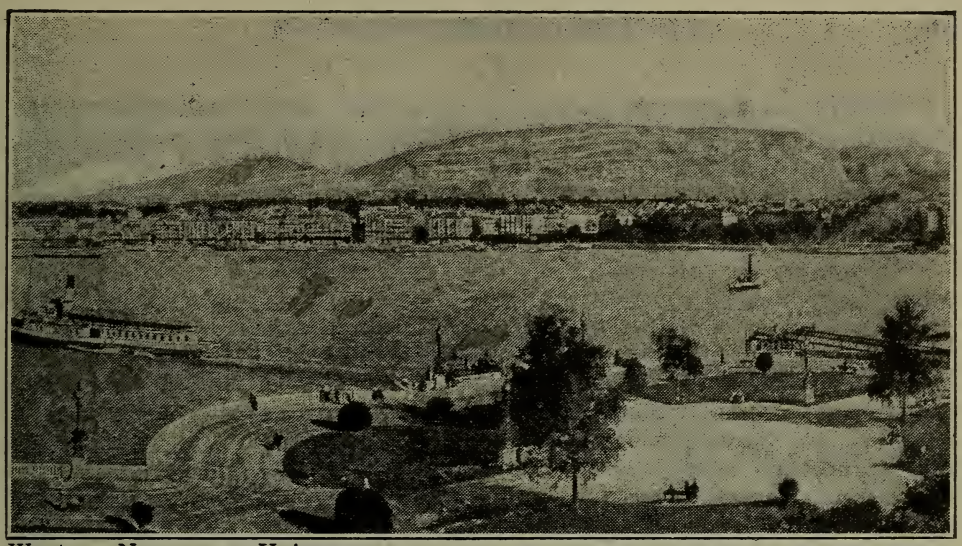
So our Lord Jesus gave this great and glorious hope of His return to His church, that His disciples might have their faces turned steadily homeward and not earthward. Oh, look toward the sky, and catch the light of the coming King. Do not look toward the earth, or permit your face to be tinged with the reflection of the yellow gold; but "look up and lift up your heads," and let your countenance reflect "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Cor. 4: 6.

May our Saviour's believing children be like men who wait for their Lord when He shall return from heaven. "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3: 3.

HOMES RUINED BY WAR

U. & U., N. Y.

SEARCHING FOR THE GRAVES OF THEIR DEAD



Western Newspaper Union

BEAUTIFUL GENEVA. THE SEAT OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

THE FIFTH SIGN — WARS AND RUMORS OF WARS

THE whole warlike condition of the world is a sign of the times. It was given as a sign by the Lord Himself.

In answering the question of His disciples, "What shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Jesus said:

"Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars. . . . Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Matt. 24: 6, 7.

Thus the constant alarms of war which fill the public press, resulting sometimes from such small things as diplomatic misunderstandings; the difficulties that arise out of prejudices regarding race and color; the smoldering flames of the contention between capital and labor,— all these international, inter-racial, inter-religious, and economic animosities that fill the papers and promise never-ending trouble, are evidences of the times we are living in, and prove that the end is near.

To the words of Christ agree the words of the ancient prophets. At the end of the world, so Haggai spoke for Jehovah, the Lord said:

"I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother." Haggai 2: 22.

Joel makes a similar prophecy:

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." Joel 3: 9-14.

It is plain from this that when "the day of the Lord is near," war is to be prepared, the mighty men awakened, all the men of war equipped and assembled, and there will be a strife such as the world has never before witnessed.

John the revelator also predicted that when the kingdoms of this world are about to "become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ" (Rev. 11: 15), then —

"The nations were angry, and Thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that Thou shouldst give reward unto Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear Thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth." Rev. 11: 18.

The Breeding of War

The writer will not attempt to point to wars now taking place as a fulfilment of these divine predictions. Before these words can be printed, changes will come which would make such references out of date. It will suffice to note the universally recognized fact that the war spirit is everywhere in the world,— among the nations, in the various classes of society, between races and creeds, between labor unions and great aggregations of capital, between parties and religions, — and all these promise never-ending conflict. "Wars and rumors of wars" are all about us, and these are but one more indication that this is "the time of the end."

The breeding of war seems to be a permanent human industry. Every government must be propped up by an

army. Issues that touch questions of sovereignty must be settled by the arbitrament of the sword. And mankind has been able to devise no way by which wars shall cease. It does not seem possible to outlaw war. Even though the best of men and the best of governments believe that war should be banished from the earth, yet wars still continue and grow increasingly destructive and terrible.

Viewing the terrible totals of desolation, misery, and death which war has caused in the world, every friend of God and man must desire its end. It would be the brightest, fairest, holiest day of earth's history which would end all the untold brutalities of human strife.

The Vain Hope of Ending War

Many persons have felt this, and acting accordingly, have striven to bring about such a glorious consummation. Leaders of the churches, together with officers of civil government, rightly discerning that war is utterly opposed to the principles of Christianity, justice, and common sense, have hoped to bring the nations to an agreement by which war may be abolished.

The idea, excellent as it is, has not proved practicable, nor will it. Churchmen, in espousing it, fail to understand the revealed purpose of God regarding the church and the world. Having cast aside the ancient and universal faith of the Christian church in those prophecies which predict the personal coming of the Lord Jesus to establish an eternal kingdom of peace in a redeemed world, and having adopted the modern fallacy of a temporal millennium to be brought about by the world's conversion to the gospel, they have put forth their efforts for world peace in harmony with this mistaken idea.

Prophecies Misapplied

And as a consequence, they have read and interpreted all Scripture prophecy in the light of this mistaken idea. Hence they talk much about the *nations'* saying they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, but say little about *God's* command to beat the plowshares

into swords and the pruning hooks into spears. Isa. 2:3, 4; Joel 3:9, 10. They talk of nations' learning war no more, but overlook God's command, "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles: Prepare war, wake up the mighty men." Joel 3:9. They speak of the heathen becoming Christ's inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth His possession, but forget He is to "break them with a rod of iron" and "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Ps. 2:9. They make much reference to the year of the redeemed, but fail to see that it is joined with the day of God's vengeance. Isa. 63:4.

They believe the God of heaven will set up His kingdom in the earth, but strangely overlook the fact that it will "break in pieces and consume" (not convert) all other kingdoms. Dan. 2:44. They read that the kingdom under the whole heaven is to be given to Christ and His people, but fail to notice that preceding this must come the judgment, the fiery flames, and the destruction of earth's temporal powers. Daniel 7.

They look for the time when the wise are to shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars forever and ever, but forget that this is preceded by the "time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation," the deliverance of the people of God, and the resurrection of the dead. Dan. 12:1-4. They believe the righteous are yet to "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father," but overlook the fact that before this the wheat and tares must grow together until the harvest; that the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels; and that the wicked are first to be gathered and cast into a furnace of fire. Matthew 13.

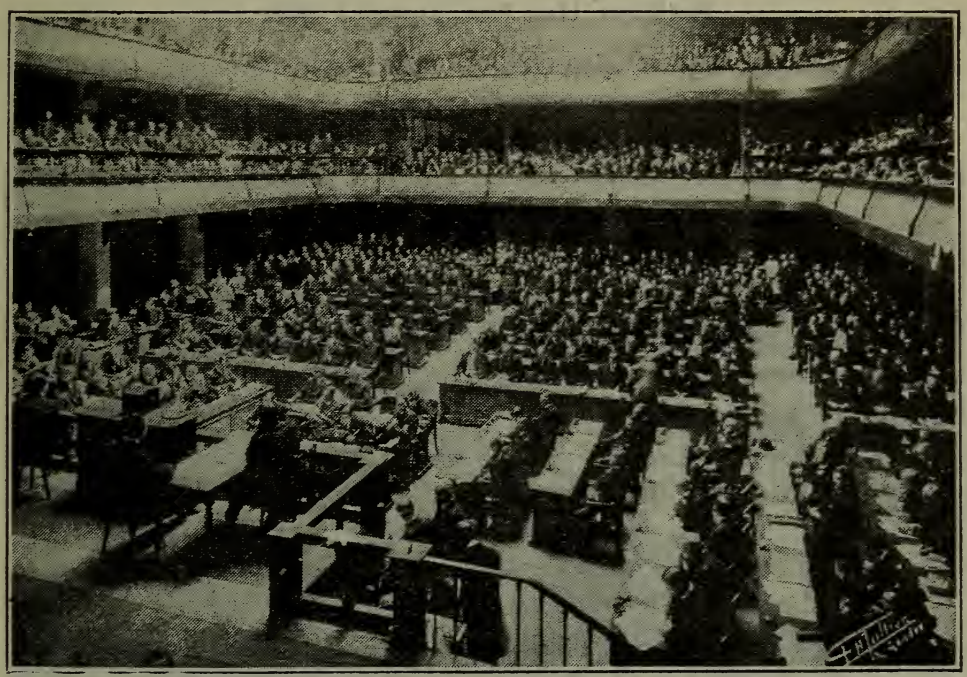
They look for the fulfilment of the prediction that the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, but do not see that when this is about to occur, the nations are angry, His wrath is come, the dead are judged, and the wicked destroyed. Rev. 11:18.

In this way prophecies referring to the times of blessing which shall prevail when Christ and His saints reign in the eternal kingdom of peace, have been misapplied to the prosperity of the church without Christ in this present age.

Hopes built upon such false interpretations and misapplied prophecies are doomed to bitter disappointment.

Civilization Has Not Stopped War

All that civilization has been able to accomplish with reference to checking war has been to utter a feeble protest and point out its horrors. It has striven to ameliorate un-



Wide World Photos

ASSEMBLY OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AT GENEVA

necessary suffering by establishing laws of war between civilized nations. But it has not stopped war, nor have its horrors been greatly lessened, if at all.

And civilization cannot stop war. It cannot stop war because war is in the human heart, and civilization cannot change the heart, it cannot transform the nature, it cannot implant a new nature.

"Whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" James 4: 1.

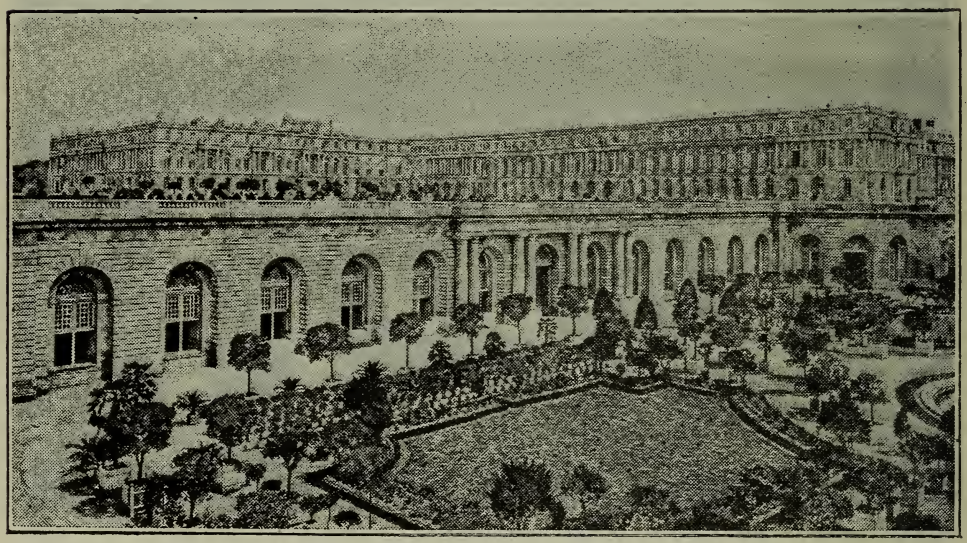
Wars will not stop until the nature of the human race is changed. Men, in their fallen nature, may recognize the

evil of war, and desire to stop it, and attempt to stop it, and resolve to stop it, and hold international conferences to stop it, but men cannot stop it as long as their nature remains fallen.

And civilization provides no remedy for fallen human nature, out of which war grows. Therefore civilization cannot stop war; for it cannot change the heart.

Religion Has Not Stopped War

Nor can religion stop war. Not even Christianity, considered as a creed, a body of teaching, can stop war. And



THE PEACE PALACE AT VERSAILLES

Christianity, considered as an organization, a church, cannot stop war.

For religion, even pure religion, as an ethical system, does not change hearts, does not implant a new nature. Christianity, as a mere creed, may give right ideas, but it cannot give right hearts. And Christianity as a church, a divine institution, so long as it must be applied to human problems by imperfect men, does not and cannot change hearts.

This change of heart, of nature, is an individual, not a national, matter. It is not accomplished by Christianity as a system, but by Christ as a person.

And civilization does not lead men to Christ. The world has not accepted, and never will accept Christ. The world cannot, therefore, stop war. Wars grow out of human nature. Christ alone can change human nature. Men will not come to Him for that change. So long as the race endures, therefore, war cannot be stopped — except by the destruction of the race that rejects Christ.

War began almost as soon as sin began. From the beginning of the race until now, war has existed and increased. Nothing that civilization, education, or philanthropy has done has been able to stop it or even check it. And nothing that man can devise or invent will stop it. The human race is doomed to destroy itself. It is feeding on its own flesh. Christ is its only hope, and it will not have Christ.

Efforts to Ameliorate War's Horrors

In the beginning of human warfare the victors were undeterred by scruples, and worked their own wills upon the conquered. There were no rules of warfare, and mercy and decency were unknown, or very seldom applied. The slaughter of surrendered armies is boasted of in kingly inscriptions as the glory of the dynasty.

Faint criticism of such procedure began to be voiced in the days of Greece. Certain men began to think of war as an evil, a calamity. They did not think it could be stopped, but they thought of it as an evil, and believed there should be some code of conduct in connection with it. Out of this grew the rudimentary rules of war. Women and children were still killed and prisoners slaughtered, but these things began to require an explanation. Fifty years before Christ, Julius Cæsar was roundly denounced in the Roman senate for putting the Usipites and Tencteri to death.

Christianity later gave a strong impulse to the movement to establish a code of military ethics. An unjust war came to be regarded as wicked. Attempts were made to establish a tradition of chivalrous warfare. One step in this direction was the "Truce of God," by which it was declared wicked to fight on certain days of the week.

By the twentieth century the code of war was quite definite, and was finally sanctioned almost as international law

by The Hague Peace Conference. Noncombatant populations, and especially women and children, were sheltered as much as possible; cities must not be besieged until such noncombatants were given time to get away from the coming bombardment and starvation; victors in occupied areas were responsible for the lives of the inhabitants; prisoners of war must not only be spared their lives, but adequately fed and housed; every reasonable opportunity must be given surgeons, nurses, and stretcher bearers to rescue and treat the wounded; and certain "barbarous" methods of killing might not be used. These rules were generally accepted, and they constituted the general attitude toward war when the nations rushed into the Great World War of 1914-18.

Wars Have Not Ended

Soon after that war started, the demand became great that it must be the last war. It became "the war to end war." A great cry rose from the hearts of the millions of bereaved, that this hideous thing must never again be permitted to break out.

Since the war, this demand has been answered by peace conferences, many in number, but all that has been accomplished to date is the scrapping of a few ships, mostly obsolete types. Wars have not stopped. There are as many of them as ever, and a prospect of many more. Millions of men are bearing arms; billions of dollars are being spent to maintain great armies and armaments; other millions in testing and experimenting with new inventions and equipment for killing; other millions for scientific development of agencies for killing; and the world is just as much an armed camp as ever before. There is the same malice and hatred and enmity in human hearts; there are the same intrigues and schemes and overreaching in diplomatic circles; and men are just as ready to fly at each other's throats as at any former time.

Man Ruined the World

Man ruined the world by his sin, and then was given a chance to show whether he could rebuild it. He ruined it in a day; he was given six thousand years to attempt its reconstruction. Full time, ample scope, large opportunity,

were granted. God has not hindered the attempt, or hurried man in making it. Man has been put to the proof, allowed to do his best, and has been given time to do it.

Man's *downward* progress was swift enough; he was given opportunity to demonstrate whether his *upward* progress would be as rapid, or whether there could be any such thing as upward progress at all, when he is left alone.

So God has been putting man to the test. He says to him, "Govern the world." Man tried it — and failed. "Regenerate the world." Man tried — and failed. "Bring about enduring peace — abolish war." Man has tried — and failed. And good men are still trying, but with little promise of success, for they are unable to change over their own evil natures, to say nothing of changing the nature of the whole human family.

Unfit to Rule

Man's day has been a long one, nearly six thousand years. In every possible circumstance and with all advantages he has demonstrated himself helpless, ignorant, evil; unfit to rule, and unfit to be left without a ruler; unfit to teach, and unwilling to be taught; unfit to be intrusted with the care or management of anything within the wide circle of the world, from the dust under his feet to his own soul.

The demonstration of man's utter incapacity is about complete. When his unworthiness of trust, and his inability for any progress except in a downward direction, are wholly demonstrated, God will set him aside as "a despised and broken vessel," and bring in the "second man," "the last Adam," even His own eternal Son.

The great experiment of six thousand years is nearing its end. Man's trial is drawing to a close. The vast demonstration is about finished. And man has manifestly failed. All classes and conditions of men have had their trial; kings, princes, nobles, peasants, beggars; statesmen, diplomats, masters; parents, children, servants; poets, philosophers, artists, mechanics,— all have had their long age of trial, and all have failed, failed because creative power alone can change fallen human nature.

STORMING THE BASTILE PRISON IN PARIS IN THE DAYS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

REVELRY ON THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION

"As it was in the days of Noe . . . Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot." Luke 17:26, 28.

THE SIXTH SIGN — RESTLESSNESS, LAWLESSNESS, AND ABOUNDING INIQUITY

ANOTHER important sign given by Christ of the nearness of His second coming, is stated in His words:

"Iniquity shall abound." Matt. 24:12.

Certainly as we look about us today, we are compelled to acknowledge that our generation is characterized by abounding iniquity.

The condition of the world before the flood is set forth as a type of the condition of the world immediately before the second coming of Christ. We are divinely directed to the days of Noah for a complete description of the conditions which will prevail before the end:

"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:26-30.

Fixing our thought upon the history of that ancient time, perhaps the first thing that arrests our attention is the fact that wickedness and corruption were widespread. We read:

"God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6: 5.

That the wickedness and atheism of that time were accompanied by violence, is thus made plain:

"The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." Gen. 6: 11.

World-wide Anarchy and Atheism

This ancient anarchy and atheism became so prevalent throughout the earth that the whole world was atheistic. As a consequence, God destroyed the earth with a deluge of water.

"God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before Me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth." Gen. 6: 12, 13.

This ancient restlessness, lawlessness, violence, and atheism are paralleled today, and thus become one of the signs of the nearness of Christ's second coming. And this present lawlessness will, unless checked, call down from heaven an equally severe judgment.

Great judgments are but the punishment for great crimes; hence great crimes are but prophecies of coming judgment. Today the world is mad with covetousness and on fire with lust. Fearless and thoughtless men rush on their downward way, eating, drinking, feasting, rioting, marrying, and giving in marriage. They anticipate no calamity. The abodes of pleasure are thronged, the marts of merchandise crowded.

The Careless Aspect of the World

Is not this careless aspect of the world, this security so deep and dead, a token of impending wrath? Most certainly did Christ, when He surveyed the future, perceive and foretell this very characteristic as a feature of the last days.

Careless and secure was the world before the flood. It despised all warning, invitation, and entreaty. It danced and rioted on the verge of destruction. And from pleasure's height to ruin's dark abyss it fell headlong. And that is given as a type of these present days.

The world is fast becoming as it was in the days of Noah. Then the earth "was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence." "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6:11, 5. So today it is corrupt, licentious, warlike. It is peopled with mighty men and men of renown, as it was then. And it is filled with strife, commotion, and violence while it awaits the coming of the deluge of fire, which will be the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.

The Deification of the Mob

When the fearful sacrifice of the World War was stopped with the signing of the Armistice between the Allies and Germany, the world rejoiced. But this rejoicing has again been turned to fear by the menace of lawlessness and violence which has taken possession of myriads of hearts. This is the specter at the feast. It is this that poisons all earth's banquets.

For lawlessness is a very real menace to the existence of civilization. It is the releasing of all the lowest passions of mankind, the setting free of the demons of lust, license, cruelty, and passion. It is the deification of the mob, the exaltation of all that is lowest to the place of power.

The Bible, which is the Christian's guidebook, makes it clear that God has ordained civil government, without specifying any particular kind, and clothed it with authority to protect life, liberty, limb, and property, and to restrain evildoers. It is ordained of God to protect every individual in his natural, God-given rights, against any invasion of these rights by any other man or body of men.

Wickedness is in opposition to, and destructive of, all liberty. The murderer takes from his victim his liberty and his right to live. The right and liberty to use that which is

their own is taken from men by the thief. The liberties of all would therefore be destroyed if lawless men were permitted to do as they chose. Hence the necessity for stable and just civil government.

Strong, stable civil government, founded on the principles of liberty, is a great bulwark against anarchy and lawlessness, and necessary in order to maintain the freedom of the world. The duty, then, of every lover of liberty, and especially every Christian man and woman, is loyally to support constituted civil government, whatever its form, in its endeavor to maintain law and order.

But the deliberate adoption of organized violence as the most effective way to right human wrongs; to kill; to burn; to wipe the slate clean; to rebuild civilization on new lines, — that is the spirit now taking possession of many.

An Age of Moral Corruption

We live in an age of moral corruption. Licentiousness of all kinds is appallingly prevalent. Our daily papers are filled with accounts of conjugal infidelity, lessons in which are being given to millions of young people in the moving-picture houses. Divorce is multiplying at an alarming rate, and this, too, indicates the great prevalence of licentiousness.

Consulting with spirits leads many who are weak-minded and unprincipled to sink into lascivious rottenness, especially those who submit themselves, soul and body, to such control. They are led captive by Satan at his will. False religions cover with a thin veil of specious words and smooth phrases a mass of impurity.

There is an immense traffic in impure literature and obscene pictures, which pander to the lower passions and outrage all decency.

There are newspapers which play up the rottenness their reporters can find, and display it to all the world. These papers dig down into the moral corruption of their cities; they feature the vile, the low, the degraded; they emphasize divorce and conjugal infidelity. And the alarming fact is that such papers, without principle or decency, have the largest circulation in many cities.

And these things here mentioned are merely the outcroppings of the gigantic evil which is swiftly destroying humanity. They are the straws that show the direction of the hurricane, the mere outer blotches that tell of the rotting virus which poisons the whole inward frame.

The Increase of Crime

Crime, too, is on an appalling increase. Judge Alfred J. Talley, of the Court of Special Sessions of New York County, at the recent induction ceremonies of a fellow judge, deliberately made this striking statement:

"This country is suffering under an indictment which proclaims it the most lawless on earth. You will find that the United States must plead guilty to that indictment."

Dr. Frederick L. Hoffman, consulting statistician of the Prudential Insurance Company of America, has, ever since 1900, compiled the "homicide rate" for twenty-eight of the leading American cities. Speaking of the figures in his report for 1923, he says:

"This is the most amazing murder record for any civilized country for which data are available. It indicates a state of affairs so startling and of such significance that no government, Federal or State, can rightfully ignore the situation. The murder rate has practically doubled in twenty-four years. It has shown a persistent upward trend, which may be accepted as a definite indication that the moral and legal forces opposed to wrongful death are yielding to the criminal and murderous instincts of a small but suggestive minority of the American people."

The Special Committee on Law Enforcement of the American Bar Association, under the chairmanship of ex-Governor Charles S. Whitman, of New York, made, in 1923, a detailed report on crime in the United States. The committee reported that 9,500 persons were killed in crimes of violence in the United States in 1921 alone. During the ten years preceding 1921, the committee stated that no less than 85,000 people were killed. Every year in America more people lose their lives at the hands of criminals than were killed in the bloodiest engagement of the Civil War, the Battle of Gettysburg. Every five and a half years more people are killed in the everyday pursuits of life in this country than in the American ranks during the World War.

Just as striking are the property losses suffered through burglary and robbery, $302,800,000 being lost in this way every year in America.

We confidently believe that these disorders and disturbances in the various nations of the earth today are precursors of the time when the Spirit of God shall be entirely withdrawn from the earth, and all the passions of the flesh shall be unrestrained.

The leaders in the world of thought and statesmanship recognize the danger in the bitter feelings of envy and revenge, and in the increase of class hatred. Clouds of evil presage hang low over the earth. All the elements which produced the French Revolution are ablaze in the hearts of men today, and that tragedy pales into insignificance in comparison with the things which are yet to be seen unless there shall come a mighty turning to God, a repentance in dust and ashes, like Nineveh's. The future is dark with terrible menace for the inhabitants of the earth. It will not be long until the lightnings begin to flash and the storm will break, such a storm as this earth has never yet witnessed.

The Spirit of Lawlessness

The spirit of restlessness and lawlessness and anarchy seems not to be limited to any one place. The impulse to cast off the restraints which law and order have placed on the lower passions of men, is taking possession of human hearts everywhere. The terrible calamities, destructions, and desolations which wait upon the footsteps of the demon of lawlessness, seem powerless to deter men from their maddened course. The fiercer passions that rage in the natural human heart are being given free reign, and are driving men forward into a terrible abyss. The Spirit of God is apparently being gradually withdrawn from the earth, and men are being left alone with all the evil passions of their nature, with no power to restrain them from breaking out into the most outrageous and barbarous excesses. We see in this an ominous forecast of that fearful period just before us, when God's Spirit will no longer strive with man, and

the door of mercy will be closed. We are entering the shadows of the events which will close human history. We face the preparations for final conflict. We stand upon the verge of that time of trouble such as never was.

The Spirit of Headlong Rashness

There is a headlong rashness that is becoming more and more a characteristic of our time. Everything moves forward in startling haste. Prudence, wisdom, and caution are brushed aside as of little account. And this characteristic, this spirit of headlong, disorderly haste, of constant restlessness, of feverish rashness, is marked in the Bible as one of the signs of the last days.

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be . . . heady." 2 Tim. 3: 1-4.

In the past the peoples of earth have, to a greater or less extent, feared the Lord. They have not been altogether atheistic. The denunciations by His messengers have caused them to tremble. When the streets of Nineveh rang with the cry, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown," none were so hardened as to treat that message with contempt. There have been other times when faith in God was weak, but unbelief was never more prevalent, impudent, and defiant than it is now.

Today there is a widespread absence of faith in the existence, the providence, and the government of a personal God. Men's ears have become dull of hearing, their hearts are waxed gross. They have passed beyond the feeling of alarm, so intrenched and fortified are they in unbelief and carelessness. There are multitudes who are practically atheists. God is not in all their thoughts. The exploded superstitions of a past age have been replaced, not by faith, but by a false science, which has become the gospel of the faithless; and by nature, which has become the god of the ungodly.

Drifting Toward Atheistic Apostasy

Certainly it seems as if the world is drifting toward some dark, dire, devilish deception, a deception naturally awaiting those who receive not the love of the truth that they might

be saved. Throwing away their only safeguard when they reject divine truth, they are given up to embrace strong delusions as a punishment for their unbelief.

Such a manifestation of atheistic apostasy is foreshadowed in the Bible prophecies:

"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2: 9-12.

The eager acceptance of the "signs and lying wonders" of the present time by those who have rejected truth (their unbelief of the truth being paralleled only by their credulous acceptance of the falsehoods of seducing spirits), indicates that the ensnaring delusion predicted in the Bible is even now entrapping its victims. It may don new disguises and take on new shapes from day to day, but it is certain before long to combine its various manifestations in one mighty denial of the truth, of the Word, and of the authority of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, hissing out its defiance in the very face of God, and belching forth its blasphemies before His very throne. But atheism shall yet meet its answer in that devastating storm of fire which shall destroy the ungodly and cleanse the world.

Peter gives us another sign of the last days when he writes:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: but the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." 2 Peter 3: 3-7.

There are scoffers today,—"scoffers walking after their own lusts," giving free reign to all their passions; scoffers with the blear of lust in their eyes and the smell of alcohol on their breath, walking in rioting, debauchery, and sin, as

well as scoffers who are polite, learned, wise, and contemptuous; scoffers who sneer and deride and mock; scoffers who are careless, contemptuous, presumptuous. And in this fact we see a fulfilment of Bible prophecy.

In this time, when it appears as if the foundations of human society and civilization are crumbling, and the safeguards which men have erected to restrain the evil propen-

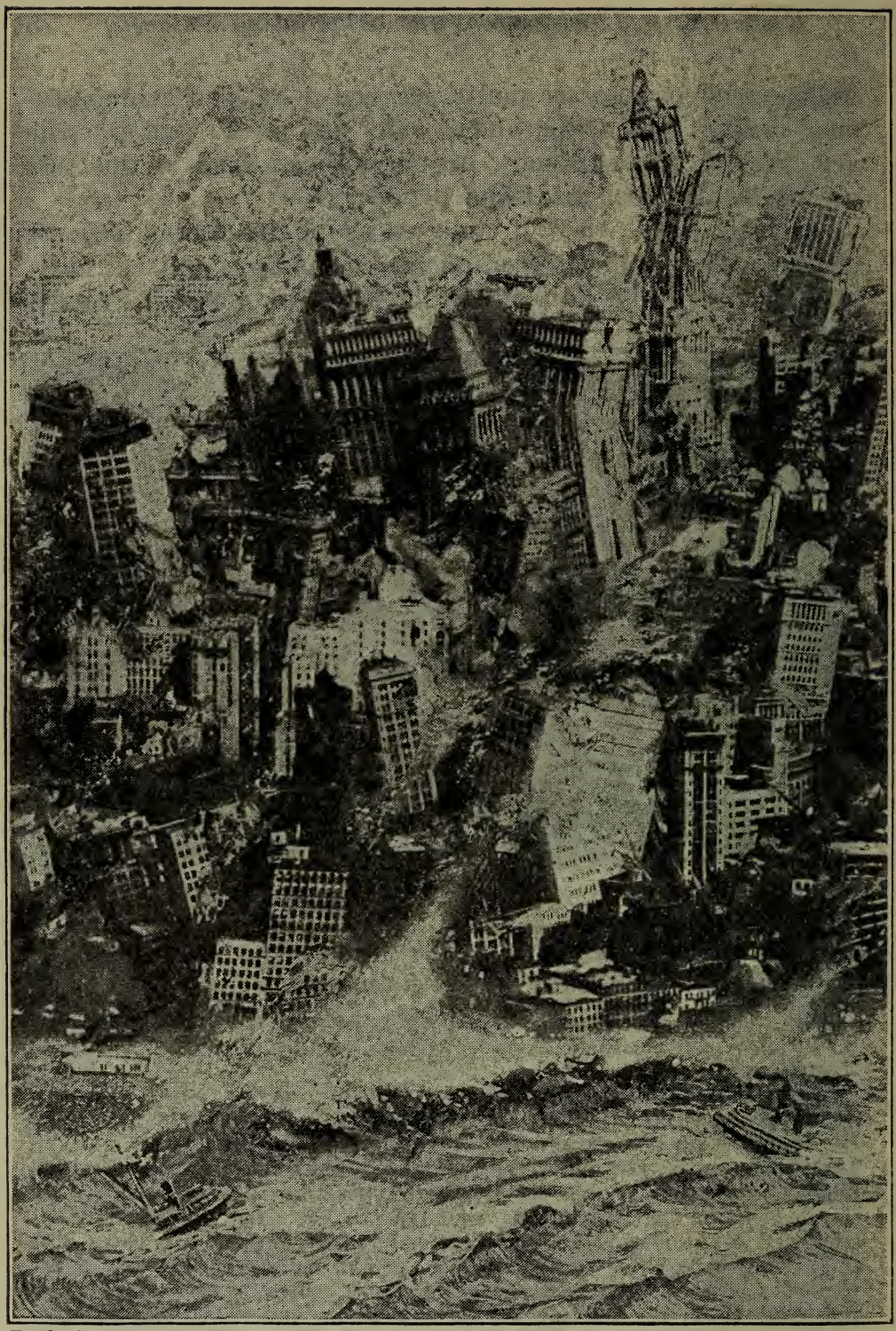
THE FLOOD

"Come into the ark of safety,
Come in and be saved today."

sities are being destroyed, what ought the Christian pilgrim to do? The Lord Himself answers:

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. . . . Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5: 7, 8.

"Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Ps. 91: 3-11.



P. & A. Photo

AN ARTIST'S CONCEPTION OF NEW YORK CITY HIT BY AN EARTHQUAKE

"The cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God." Rev. 16:19.

THE LAST PRAYER

THE SEVENTH SIGN — PESTILENCES, EARTHQUAKES, AND STORMS BY LAND AND SEA

Among the signs spoken of by our Lord to precede His second coming, were the following:

"There shall be . . . pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places." Matt. 24: 7.

To this agree the words of Isaiah, who was shown in vision the future day when "the Lord shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth." Isa. 24: 21. In connection with the scenes of that day he said:

"The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again." Isa. 24: 19, 20.

Speaking of the same time, Ezekiel wrote:

"All the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at My presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places

shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. . . . And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him . . . an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone." Eze. 38: 20-22.

Joel, also, prophesied similarly of these great signs:

"I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke." Joel 2: 30.

Luke records the prophecy of Christ thus:

"Great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Luke 21: 11.

From these passages it is plain that evidences in the earth itself, which is represented as groaning and travailing in pain while waiting eagerly for its redemption, will be given of the approach of the end.

Destructive Geological Convulsions

Earthquakes and pestilences and destructive storms have rapidly increased in number and violence during recent years.

"Fire, and hail; snow, and vapors; stormy wind fulfilling His word." Ps. 148: 8.

These are constant reminders of the insecurity and unstability of all earthly things. There is nothing quite so much calculated to solemnize the thoughts and compel serious consideration of the eternal things of God, as to have the solid earth tremble under one's feet, and witness the collapse of the works of human hands. This point is strongly presented by Dr. Samuel Kneeland, A. M., in his "Volcanoes and Earthquakes," page 207. He writes:

"There is something preternaturally terrible in the earthquake, when the earth, which we think the emblem of solidity, trembles under our feet, and geological convulsions, the most destructive agents of the past, threaten us in the present. The sensation is so beyond experience, and the feeling of powerlessness so overwhelming, that amid the crash man looks hopelessly around, and can simply bow the head in silent, motionless despair, as if expecting every moment to be buried in the ruins. With the cries and groans of the terrified people in the houses and in the streets, are heard the dull sounds of falling buildings, and appalling subterranean rumblings, and the thoughts of all are turned, where they always are instinctively in times of unexpected, inexplicable disaster, Godward. When the earth is thus moved by invisible hands, each moment seems a year, and as when death appears suddenly imminent, the events of a lifetime pass in an instant before the eyes of the soul.

It is a novel and a terrifying sight to behold houses reel like a drunken man, as the earth waves reach them; it is more like the disturbed dreams of fever, or the scenic display of the drama, than any conception of reality."

The Most Destructive Earthquakes

A list of all earthquakes from 577 A. D. to the present time, not including the most destructive of all, the Japanese earthquake of September 1, 1923, in which about 300,000 lives were lost, as given by the New York *Tribune*, shows a loss in the thirty-one disasters listed, of 1,328,000 human lives. The list is as follows:

PLACE	YEAR	NO. KILLED
Constantinople	577	10,000
Catania	1137	15,000
Syria	1158	20,000
Silicia	1268	60,000
Naples	1456	40,000
Lisbon	1531	30,000
Naples	1626	70,000
Vesuvius	1631	18,000
Calabria	1638	10,000
Schamaki	1667	80,000
Sicily	1693	100,000
Yeddo	1703	190,000
Algiers	1716	18,000
Peking	1731	96,000
Lima and Callao	1746	18,000
Cairo	1754	40,000
Kashue (Persia)	1755	40,000
Lisbon	1755	50,000
Syria	1759	20,000
Central America	1797	40,000
Aleppo	1822	20,000
Calabria	1857	10,000
San Jose de Cucuta, Colombia	1875	14,000
Krakatao (Strait of Sunda)	1883	36,000
Island of Hondo, Japan	1891	10,000
Sanriku, Japan	1896	27,000
Martinique and St. Vincent	1902	40,000
Messina and fifty-four towns in Italy	1908	164,000
Central Italy	1914	12,000
Central Java	1919	10,000
Persia	1923	20,000

A Most Striking Increase of Earthquakes

In fulfilment of this prophecy given by Christ, statistics issued by the British Association for the Advancement of Science reveal that there has been, during century after

century of the Christian era, a most striking increase of destructive earthquakes. Not including small earthquakes, but only those which have caused destruction of life and property, these statistics give the number of destructive earthquakes from the first to the twentieth century. Beginning with fifteen in the first century, there is shown a gradual

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE IN JAPAN

increase to 115 in the thirteenth century. From that time the list is as follows:

Fourteenth	century	137
Fifteenth	"	174
Sixteenth	"	253
Seventeenth	"	378
Eighteenth	"	640
Nineteenth	"	2,119

Certainly these figures bear out the prophecy of our Lord. And they do not include the frightfully destructive earthquakes of this present century, such as those of San Francisco and Japan.

Precursors of the Great Storm of God's Wrath

Storms of extraordinarily destructive power,— tempests, hurricanes, tornadoes, cyclones, " the sea and the waves roar-

ing" (Luke 21:25),— all these are becoming more common and more severe. They fulfil God's word, and are precursors of that great storm of His wrath which will close human history.

Pestilences, waiting on the footsteps of famine, have also increased, and have become one of the sources of acute distress to great populations. The epidemic of Spanish influenza, a few years ago, slew millions of people. Typhus fever and other plagues periodically carry off other millions, sometimes in China, sometimes in Russia, sometimes in other countries. No advance of civilization, no development of science, seems to be able to prevent the occurrence of these terrible epidemics, even in the most highly developed countries.

And in all these things we see the fulfilment in our own day of the prophecies of Christ and His Word, and we want to learn from them the lesson that they are designed to teach, that lesson spoken of by Jesus when He said:

"So, likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is at hand." Luke 21:31.

John Biddolph, in a poem on the Lisbon earthquake, written in 1755, said:

"Who can with curious eyes this globe survey,
And not behold it tottering with decay?
All things created, God's designs fulfil,
And natural causes work His destined will.
And that eternal Word, which cannot lie,
To mortals hath revealed in prophecy
That in these latter days such signs should come,
Preludes and prologues to the general doom.
But not the Son of man can tell that day;
Then, lest it find you sleeping, watch and pray."

THE RICH MAN

"Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." Luke 12:20.

THE MISER

"He heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them." Ps. 39:6.

LABOR UNIONS CROSSING LONDON BRIDGE

THE EIGHTH SIGN — CAPITAL AND LABOR

ARISING from another direction than the signs already discussed, there is additional trouble in prospect for the inhabitants of this world in the bitter relations existing and growing ever more acute in the situation between capital and labor. This situation is also a subject of Bible prophecy. This is the prophecy:

"Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you." James 5: 1-6.

Unparalleled Heaping Together of Riches

From this passage it is clear that "the last days" are to be marked by an unparalleled heaping together of wealth

and treasure. Men then were to amass wealth as never before in the history of the race. This wealth in some part was to be amassed unjustly, unfairly, by defrauding "the laborers who have reaped down your fields," or in other words, who are producing the wealth of the world. These laborers were to be treated wrongfully. "Ye have condemned and killed the just." The wealth thus gathered was to be used for "pleasure" and wantonness. And all this is with reference to "the last days."

To this agrees the prophecy of Paul:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be . . . covetous." 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2.

Covetousness is a discontented, unsatisfied, grasping desire for the things of this world. It will especially characterize "the last days." It will lead men to practise all manner of injustice in order to pile up the gains of dishonesty.

This is the age pointed to in the prophetic picture. Never before in human history have such vast accumulations of wealth been known as today. Never before has there been such a mad rush to make money quickly. The millionaire and the multimillionaire are much in evidence today. There are colossal fortunes, some reaching the billion mark. There is an unprecedented hoarding of treasures. There are unparalleled accumulations and combinations of capital.

Increase of Poverty

And on the other hand, there has been a remarkable increase in poverty. The wealth of the world cannot be gathered into a few hands without producing want, suffering, and misery among myriads. And many of those who are the beneficiaries of the hoarded wealth are indifferent to these sufferings. "Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton." With no thought of their responsibility to their fellow men, they live only for the good time they can obtain for themselves. Nothing is quite so rapacious and heartless as greed and covetousness. The rights of others are disregarded, the welfare and sometimes even the lives of men are given no consideration when merciless schemes and intrigues can be made to yield large profits.

Formation of Labor Unions

Hence the laboring men, in order to obtain rights which are not voluntarily accorded them, and to secure an adequate return for their labor, are compelled to organize to protect themselves. This they do by forming labor unions, with resulting strikes, boycotts, and lockouts. Labor is organized. Capital is organized. And they are locked in a titanic struggle for the supremacy. Never before was labor so powerful as it is today. Never before was organized capital so gigantic. And each grows stronger daily. Certainly this is one of the factors which, together with international, interracial, and interreligious hatred, will bring all the world ultimately — and before long — to Armageddon.

The Onrushing Armageddon

God's people, to whom these things constitute a sign of the times, should stand apart from all this maneuvering for place in the onrushing Armageddon. They have no part in these combinations and federations. God's counsel to them is this:

"Say ye not, A confederacy, to all them to whom this people shall say, A confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." Isa. 8: 12.

Instead of being afraid of man or the strength of man, God says to His people:

"Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself; and let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread." Verse 13.

"The Coming of the Lord Draweth Nigh"

The people of God have no need to fear at this time, even when they be ground between the upper and nether millstones of capital and labor. God is their refuge, and for just such a time as this He gives this word of counsel:

"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." James 5: 7, 8.

Yes, "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." That is the meaning of these developments that we see on every hand. And the time of the deliverance of God's people is nearly here.

THE WORLD'S MAD STRUGGLE

THE NINTH SIGN — DISTRESS OF NATIONS WITH PERPLEXITY

THE stern, grim, terrible realities of blood await the world. The war of the great day rolls in upon mankind. And the fear of the future poisons all earth's banquets, stalks as a specter at every feast, and causes men's hearts to fail for fear.

Perilous times have come. Volcanic forces are seething and surging beneath our feet. The deep foundations of the world are being convulsed. But serious as these things are, men of clear-eyed vision and wide information see in them portents of still more perilous times to come. These are only the mutterings of the coming tempest, the tremblings of the coming earthquake, the eddies of the approaching whirlwind, the grating of the thunder of the rushing avalanche of ruin that overhangs the world. And thinking men are afraid.

This distress of nations, resulting in perplexity and fear, constitutes one more of the great signs of the times. Jesus said:

"There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Luke 21: 25-28.

Wandering Blindly in Darkness

Above all other times, there is distress of nations today. Everywhere in the world, among all ranks and classes of men, there is distress. And there is increasing distress in the relations of nations to one another. Torn by doubt and unbelief, its old established faiths shaken to their foundations, the world, grown old and cold and weary, is distressed and utterly distraught, war-stricken and disillusioned, and is now wandering blindly in darkness, crying for light and leadership, but finding neither.

A great part of this distress is the aftermath of the World War. Another considerable part is due to feverish preparations being made for the next world war.

Fuel for Another World Conflagration

The peace which was signed at Versailles has not been a real peace. It did not remove the seeds of strife. It did not blot out national animosities and jealousies. It did not quench the smoldering fires of hatred and bitterness. It left many questions unsettled and undecided.

It takes more than a treaty of peace, more than a League of Nations, more than a Dawes plan, to remove hatred from the human heart. The war wrought horrors on an unprecedented scale; it covered wide fields with corpses; it soaked long trenches and broad acres with blood; it brought pitiless exposure to merciless winter to millions; it caused terrible suffering; it imposed unspeakable wretchedness and misery upon women and children; it mangled thousands upon thousands of human bodies; it rent great ships asunder; it rained explosives from the clouds; it ruined cities; it laid waste great areas of fruitful fields; it destroyed fair fruit trees and happy homes; it blasted the productiveness of the

soil; and it sowed the earth with the graves of the dead. It will take more than a peace treaty to blot the memory of these things from human minds and hearts. And out of this memory grow bitterness, hostility, malice, hatred — and fear; all the elements to provide the fuel for another world conflagration.

Unemployment

Hundreds of billions of the world's wealth were consumed in the World War, resulting in the greatest national debts ever known. Millions of men were thrown out of work, and unemployment has become one of the serious problems of the world, and is the source of acute distress. The statesmen of the world look with apprehension upon this growing unemployment problem, and are able to provide only temporary relief. Want and suffering stalk about among the poor, and sow the seeds of revolt and lawlessness.

High Cost of Living

High prices bring additional perplexity and distress. Everywhere in the world, prices on all commodities have mounted, especially on the necessities of life, until the cost of living is far higher than ever before. The poor are confronted with a gigantic problem to know how to provide enough food to maintain life. The elements of food which are essential to life and health are getting beyond the reach of many. One by one the more nourishing foods are relinquished, and an effort is made to maintain health and strength on an impoverished diet. Multitudes are undernourished.

Pestilences and Epidemics

And as pestilences and epidemics follow closely in the wake of hunger and want, so sickness due to undernourishment is carrying off great numbers of people. This condition is not limited to any one country, but seems to be world-wide. In many places there is a scarcity of foodstuffs, and in other places where there is more food, prices are so high as to place a proper supply of food within the reach of a comparative few. Such conditions breed distress and perplexity.

Taxation and Depreciation of Money

Making this condition still more acute are two other factors,— taxation and the depreciation of currency. Taxes have mounted to unprecedented heights. There is a load of taxation on the populations of the world today such as has never before been known. And to pay these taxes, and at the same time sustain life, there is an inflated currency, the value of which is greatly diminished.

The effect of the World War has been felt everywhere in the depreciation of money values. Some countries have suffered more than others, having the value of their currency wiped out, but all countries have been affected — and distressed. And there seems very little prospect that prices will be materially lowered, that taxes will be greatly diminished, or that currency values will ever be fully restored. The world has received a grievous hurt, from which it is unlikely ever entirely to recover.

The Revolt Against Civilization

Growing out of these conditions which make the maintenance of life increasingly difficult, is what has been termed, "The Revolt Against Civilization." Everywhere, in all nations, there is a movement on among the lower classes, seeking to change the existing order of things, to discard all governmental forms, to abolish established customs, to cast off the restraints that civilization has imposed. There is an upheaval in the lower strata of society which may result in a change of position and a shifting of places, the lower strata becoming the upper, and the upper becoming submerged — or worse.

Lothrop Stoddard, A. M., Ph. D., has written a book, "The Revolt Against Civilization," in which he comments as follows on this possibility:

"These feelings [of the under-man of discontent and opposition to civilization], of course, vary all the way from dull, unreasoning dislike to flaming hatred and rebellion. But in the last analysis, they are directed not merely against imperfections in the social order, *but against the social order itself.*

"This is a point which is rarely mentioned, and still more rarely understood. Yet it is the meat of the whole matter. We must realize

clearly that the basic attitude of the Under-Man is an instinctive and natural *revolt against civilization*. . . . Civilization automatically evolves strong social controls which keep down the antisocial elements. . . . Desperate individuals, of course, break forth into crime, but society hunts them down and eliminates them by prison and the scaffold.

"The Under-Man may thus be controlled. But he remains; he multiplies; he bides his time. And now and then his time comes. When a civilization falters beneath its own weight and by the decay of its human foundations; when its structure is shaken by the storms of war, dissension, or calamity; then the long-repressed forces of atavistic revolt gather themselves together for a spring."—*Pages 24, 25.*

Society's Dregs Boiling to the Top

Mr. Stoddard describes the progress of such a revolution as if it were actually transpiring. From his evolutionary statements we must, of course, dissent. Thus he continues:

"The social revolution is now in full swing. Such upheavals are profoundly terrible. . . . Not only is society in the grip of its barbarians, but every individual falls more or less under the sway of his own lower instincts. For in this respect the individual is like society. Each of us has within him an 'Under-Man,' that primitive animality which is the heritage of our human, and even our prehuman, past. This Under-Man may be buried deep in the recesses of our being: but he is there, and psychoanalysis informs us of his latent power. This primitive animality, potentially present even in the noblest natures, continuously dominates the lower social strata, especially the pauper, criminal, and degenerate elements — civilization's 'inner barbarians.' Now, when society's dregs boil to the top, a similar process takes place in individuals, to whatever social level they may belong. In virtually every member of the community there is a distinct resurgence of the brute and the savage, and the atavistic trend thus becomes practically universal.

"This explains most of the seemingly mysterious phenomena of revolution. It accounts for the mental contagion which infects all classes; the wild elation with which the revolution is first hailed; the way in which even well-poised men throw themselves into the stream, let it carry them whither it lists, and commit acts which they afterward not only cannot explain but cannot even remember. General atavistic resurgence also accounts for the ferocious temper displayed, not merely by the revolutionists, but by their counter-revolutionary opponents as well. However much they may differ in their principles, 'Reds' and 'Whites' display the same savage spirit and commit similar cruelties. This is because society and the individual have been alike rebarbarized."—*Pages 27, 28.*

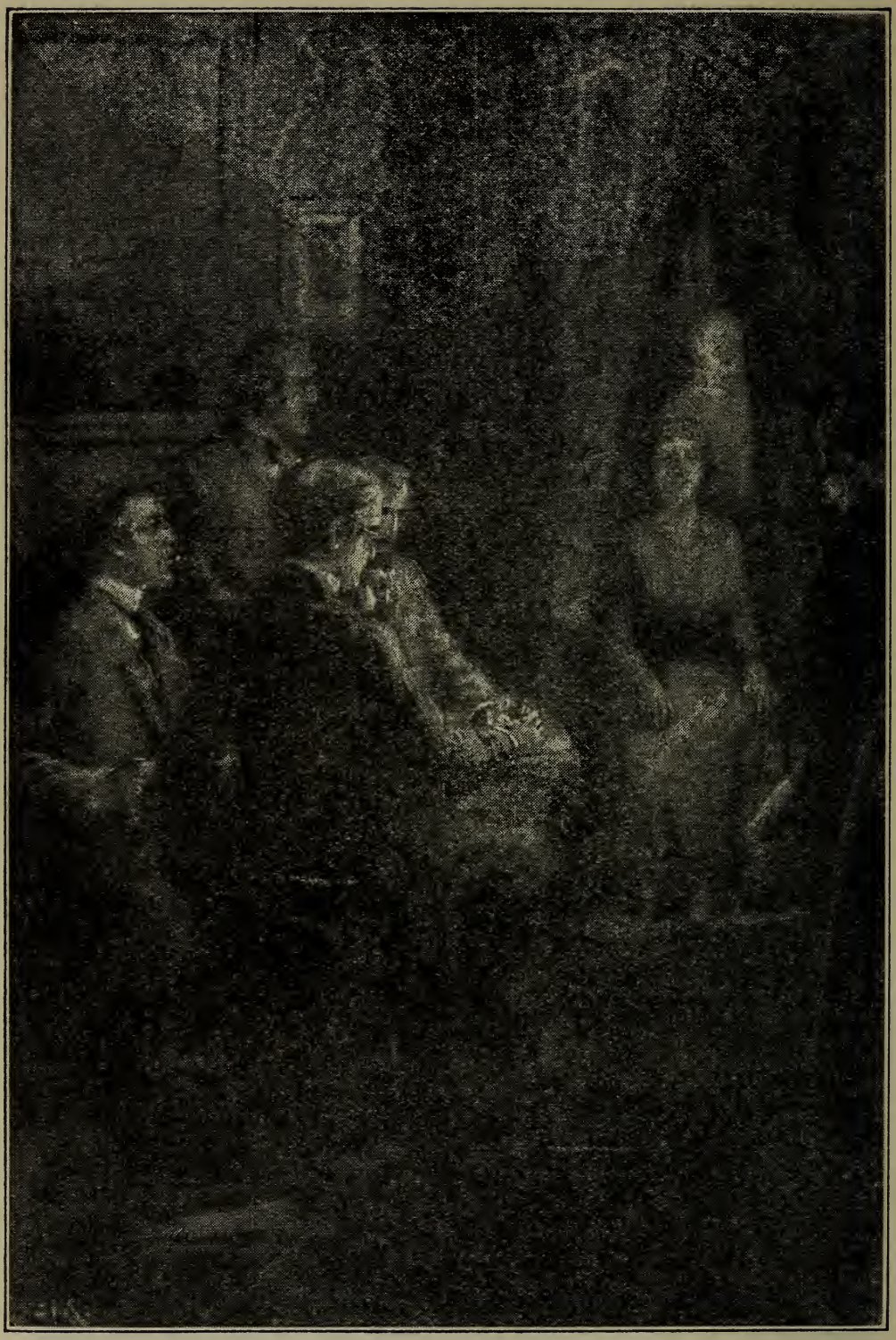
Changing "atavism" here to "fallen nature," we would let this description stand as an accurate picture of the possibilities inhering in the conditions now existing in the world. Certainly men, because of the "distress of nations with per-

plexity," have cause for fear when "looking after those things which are coming on the earth."

Political Ferment Among the Nations

This upheaval manifests itself particularly in the political ferment among and in the nations. There is a clash of parties, groups, classes, races, and creeds. Everywhere there is social discontent, and the formation of parties and party machinery to change the existing order of things. Governments are insecure today — all governments. There is nothing stable. Thrones and empires have crashed into the dust. Crowned heads are falling. Governmental structures are tottering. Socialism, anarchism, syndicalism, communism, are the vogue as never before. They strain their eyes to catch the first rays of the "red dawn." Revolt is in the very air. It penetrates everywhere. Young and old are carried away with a desire for a "freedom" which is only license. It manifests itself in the dress, in the speech, in the conduct, in all human contact. All the restraints imposed by law, religion, custom, or even ordinary politeness, are being cast aside as outworn, and free rein is being given to every impulse and passion. In the state, in the church, and in the home, this spirit of independence is manifesting itself, corrupting all the finer things of life, and calling for the storm of God's wrath to be visited upon an impenitent world.

"Distress of nations, with perplexity," is one of the outstanding signs of our Lord's soon return.



A SPIRITUALISTIC MEDIUM
HOLDING A SEANCE

"If they shall say unto you, . . . Behold He is in the secret chambers; believe it not." Matt. 24:26.

HOME OF THE FOX FAMILY, HYDESVILLE, N. Y.

Modern Spiritualism originated in this house, March 31, 1848.

THE TENTH SIGN — SPIRITUALISM

SUFFICIENTLY grave, indeed, are the possibilities of disaster and distress already discussed. But more must be added. If men were left alone in their work of rebellion, lawlessness, and destruction, it would be bad enough. But men are not alone. Joined with them in this work of self-destruction are demon spirits, bent wholly on completing the work of human deception and ruin.

The appearance and work and development of Spiritualism, more accurately Spiritism, is another outstanding sign of the Lord's coming.

Paul foretold the appearance of this movement, and accurately described its character. He wrote:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron." 1 Tim. 4: 1, 2.

"Seducing spirits" are to work "in the latter times." This will constitute a departure "from the faith." It will teach "doctrines of devils."

A Pretended Miracle-Working Power

Jesus, in His answer to the disciples' inquiry about the signs of His second coming, said:

"There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." Matt. 24: 24.

One of the evidences, then, of the nearness of the end will be a miracle-working power, pretending to speak for Christ and in His name, professing to be religious, but which is essentially deceptive and untrue. Its sole purpose is to deceive, and those who are not of the very elect will be carried away by its delusions.

Paul again spoke of this sign when he wrote:

"Then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." 2 Thess. 2: 8-12.

Here is forecast a system, appearing just before Christ's second coming, which will, using "all power and signs and lying wonders," work "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness," bringing "strong delusion" to those who "believed not the truth," but the end of which will be that the Lord, when He comes, "shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming."

"Power and Signs and Lying Wonders"

Spiritualism fulfils these prophecies. Making its appearance, in modern times, in 1848, in Hydesville, N. Y., in what was called the "rapping delusion," it has developed through the years since then until today it is attracting the attention of the world. It is hailed by some as "The New Revelation." Tens of thousands have accepted it as a genuine system of religion, and have turned to it for solace and comfort in bereavement. Connected with it is a body of phenomena which the Bible accurately describes as "power and signs and lying wonders," ranging all the way from the most prim-

itive rapping, through table tipping, slate writing, and ouija boards, to the materialization of spirits and spirit photography.

Books by the score and hundred have been, and are, coming from the press, teaching the doctrines of Spiritualism. The daily press and the magazines are filled with its claims, its pretensions, its teachings, and accounts of its phenomena. It has its prominent and well-known spokesmen, who describe its workings to great audiences. And multitudes of mediums ply their trade throughout all lands.

A Revival of Ancient Witchcraft

Spiritualism is not of God. It is only a revival, in a modern guise, of the condemned and prohibited sorcery, wizardry, witchcraft, and necromancy of old. Its teaching is falsehood, its claims are untrue, its miracles are frauds, its pretenses are lies, its religion is hypocrisy, its influence is a menace to life and sanity, its tendency is toward evil and death, its power is of the devil, and its appearance now is a sign of the times, and a fulfilment of Bible prophecy.

Spiritualism is not, as it would like to have its dupes believe, a new development. It is old, as old as sin, as old as Satan. The first spirit medium was the serpent in the garden of Eden.

God prohibited and condemned Spiritualism in ancient Israel. He said:

"Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God." Lev. 19: 31.

God's own appointed penalty for mediumship anciently was death.

"A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them." Lev. 20: 27.

Those who trifle with Spiritualism are playing with death.

An Abomination to God

Consulting with familiar spirits now is no more pleasing to God than it was in ancient times. He declared it to be an abomination.

"There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and because of these abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee." Deut. 18: 10-12.

In the New Testament, Spiritualism, under its older and more accurate name of "witchcraft," is classed with all other works of the flesh.

"Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, *witchcraft*, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that *they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*" Gal. 5: 19-21.

Excluded from God's coming kingdom are those who practise Spiritualism.

"Without are dogs, and *sorcerers*, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." Rev. 22: 15.

Its False Teachings

The teachings of Spiritualism are false. They contradict God's Word.

Spiritualism teaches that man is immortal. The Bible declares God alone to be immortal.

"Which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; *who only hath immortality*, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting." 1 Tim. 6: 15, 16.

Man is said in the Scriptures to be altogether finite and mortal.

"Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his Maker?" Job 4: 17.

Spiritualism declares man to be conscious in death, and claims to provide a way of communication between the dead and the living. This claim the Bible overthrows and utterly demolishes by proving man to be unconscious in death. His ability to think and reason, his intellectual powers, come to an end with death.

"Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Ps. 146: 3, 4.

"In death there is no remembrance of Thee: in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?" Ps. 6: 5.

"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." Ps. 115: 17.

The State of the Dead

Death brings a complete cessation of conscious existence.

"The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Eccl. 9: 5, 6.

A study of the following Scripture passages, here merely cited, will disclose that —

The dead are not in heaven: John 3: 13; 7: 33, 34; 8: 21; 13: 33; Acts 2: 34.

They are not in hell-fire: Job 21: 30; 2 Peter 2: 9.

They are in their graves: John 5: 28, 29; Acts 2: 29.

They are all, both righteous and wicked, in one place: Eccl. 3: 20.

They are asleep in the dust: Gen. 3: 19; Dan. 12: 2; Ps. 22: 15; Job 7: 21.

The grave is a place of silence, of darkness, of repose: Job 3: 11-19; 10: 21, 22; Ps. 88: 12; Eccl. 9: 10.

The dead are asleep, unconscious: Deut. 31: 16; 2 Sam. 7: 12; 1 Kings 2: 10; 11: 21, 43; 2 Chron. 9: 31; 2 Kings 20: 21; 2 Chron. 32: 33; 26: 23; Job 3: 13; 7: 21; 14: 21; Ps. 76: 5; Matt. 27: 52; Acts 7: 60; 13: 36; 1 Cor. 15: 6, 18, 20, 51; 1 Thess. 5: 10; 2 Peter 3: 4.

The dead exercise no mental powers, and praise not the Lord: Ps. 6: 5; 88: 10-12; 115: 17; 146: 3, 4; Eccl. 9: 6; Isa. 38: 18, 19; Job 14: 12.

The dead know not anything: Eccl. 9: 5, 6, 10; Job 14: 21; Isa. 63: 16.

Nothing that has been said here is to be construed as meaning that "death ends all." Death does not end all. There is to be a resurrection from the dead. There is to be a future life. What is meant here is that the teaching of the Bible is to the effect that this future life begins, not at death, but at the resurrection from the dead. Between death and the resurrection there is unconsciousness and sleep.

And this truth, made so plain in the Bible, utterly destroys the whole foundation and structure of Spiritualism, which teaches the conscious state of the dead. The Bible and Spiritualism are opposites. To believe one is to reject the other.

Phenomena the Work of Demons

The so-called miracles of Spiritualism are performed by fallen angels. The phenomena of this false system are the work of demons. The pretended spirits of the dead are the spirits of demons masquerading as the spirits of the dead. The wisdom manifested in Spiritualism's pretended communications is that wisdom which "descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." James 3:15.

There is a higher order of created intelligence than mankind, called angels.

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? For Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honor." Ps. 8:4, 5.

Some of these angels "kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation." Jude 6.

Of these wandering spirits we have the record that "God spared not the angels that sinned." 2 Peter 2:4.

There was warfare among the angels, rebellion against God, a break with the divine government, and exclusion from heaven. (See Rev. 12:7-9.)

It is these fallen angels who impersonate the dead, disguise themselves as spirits of the dead, speak in the name of the dead, give out information as from the dead, perform signs and lying wonders, and work all the phenomena of Spiritualism. Their sole purpose is to deceive unwary souls, and lead them to eternal destruction.

The Bible the Only Protection

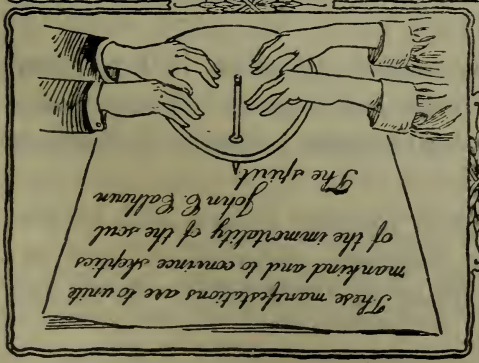
The Scriptures of Truth show to be false the revelations made by Satan and his angels through spirit mediums. Our only protection against the lying claims of this latter-day delusion is the Bible. It solves forever the dark problem of death. It lights a lamp of hope for the weary and heavy laden. It gives assurance of life beyond the grave. It strengthens those who mourn, comforts the bereaved, and points forward to a better, brighter day, the beginning of which is near at hand.

Satan is sweeping the whole world into his delusions. By Spiritualism, the work of demoniac spirits, he is prepar-

ing the world for Armageddon and the terrible scenes which will end human history. It is the "spirits of devils" which gather the nations to the last war.

"They are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Rev. 16: 14, 16.

And so Spiritualism is one of the greatest of the signs of the times, and one of the factors contributing the most to the "distress of nations with perplexity."



OUIJA BOARD AND PLANCHETTE

the picture above is shown the ouija board on which is printed the alphabet and the names of the dead people with whom the sitters desire to communicate. The planchette moves upon this board and with its pointer spells out words and points to names.

The smaller picture below represents the writing planchette

LOT FLEEING FROM SODOM

"In the last days perilous times shall come." 2 Tim. 3:1.

THE ELEVENTH SIGN — THE PREVAILING UNBELIEF IN THE CHURCH

THE world has made astonishing progress in material things, in scientific discovery, in general knowledge, in educational facilities, in manufacturing ability, in modes of travel and transportation. But it has not correspondingly advanced morally or spiritually. Men are not nobler and more honorable than they were. Women are not purer and more modest. Children are not better behaved and more respectful.

It is true that the world is *better off* than it has been. It is more highly civilized, but it is not *better*. It has many material blessings that it never had before. But it is farther from God than ever.

Men preach that the world has become better and better. But they preach error. They mistake civilization and respectability for Christianity. That is their idea. It is not a Bible doctrine. Jesus said,

"As it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Luke 17:26.

The condition of the world just prior to the flood is a picture of it before the coming of the Lord. The people had gone downward rather than upward, had become worse rather than better, lower rather than higher, more debased and bestial rather than more refined and spiritual. Instead of being nearer to God, they were farther away. Indeed, they had become so excessively vile and corrupt that God swept them out of existence with the deluge.

So "evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse" "in the last days." 2 Tim. 3:13, 1.

Wiser, but Not Better

It is surprising that otherwise intelligent men are deceived into believing that improvement in material prosperity and general intelligence is the same as an increase in moral goodness. And yet men are deceived. It is not uncommon to hear a preacher or a public speaker declare that the world has grown better, and then try to support his contention by pointing to the conveniences and comforts which this age has produced. They point to the progression of the race, the increase of knowledge, the improvement of living conditions. All of this we admit, and admitting it, still contend that knowledge is not righteousness, that respectability is not spirituality. The race has grown wiser, but not better.

There is progress indeed, but not toward God,—progress in military science, in manufacturing, in wealth, in commerce, in invention, in material things; but the progress of the world morally is toward perdition. For while the world has been progressing in material wealth, it has been progressing also in moral poverty; while there has been progression in material power, there has been an equal progression in moral weakness; while men have made progress in material greatness, they have made similar progress in moral littleness.

Departure From the Old Standards

One of the great signs of our Lord's return is the departure, everywhere manifest today, from the old standards of morality, faith, and righteousness.

Jesus spoke of this departure from the faith when He asked:

"When the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18: 8.

That the last days would be especially marked by apostasy and unbelief among professed Christians, is made very plain in the prophecies of the Bible regarding Christ's second coming. The Spirit of God gave special emphasis to this development. Paul wrote:

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the *latter times* some shall depart from the faith." 1 Tim. 4: 1.

Here is shown a departure from the true faith instead of obedience to it. Again Paul wrote:

"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Tim. 4: 3, 4.

The last days, then, are to be marked by a turning away from true gospel salvation, to a false hope, away from sound doctrine to fables.

Peter wrote:

"There shall come *in the last days scoffers.*" 2 Peter 3: 3.

The Saviour Himself listed among the signs of His return the same departure from the faith. He said,

"Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Matt. 24: 12.

Iniquity will *abound* in the last days among all grades of society, not only in the world, but in the church. It will become so abundant, will so *abound*, that the love which many had for God and truth will grow cold, and they will turn away their hearts and lives, and will mingle in the iniquity and frivolity of the worldly ones.

Departure From the Faith

Paul wrote again of this departure from the faith, when he said:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of

those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." 2 Tim. 3: 1-5.

Various translations of this passage serve to bring out its force. Weymouth has it:

"Of this be assured: in the last days grievous times will set in. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, profane. They will be disobedient to parents, thankless, irreligious, destitute of natural affection, unforgiving, slanderers. They will have no self-control, but will be brutal, opposed to goodness, treacherous, headstrong, self-important. They will love pleasure instead of loving God, and will keep up a make-believe of piety, and yet live in defiance of its power. Turn away from people of this sort."—*The New Testament in Modern Speech.*

Moffatt translates it:

"Mark this, there are hard times coming in the last days. For men will be selfish, fond of money, boastful, haughty, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, irreverent, callous, relentless, scurrilous, dissolute, and savage; they will hate goodness, they will be treacherous, reckless and conceited, preferring pleasure to God — for though they keep up a form of religion, they will have nothing to do with it as a force. Avoid all such."— *The New Testament (a new translation).*

Fenton puts it thus:

"Know this, however, that in the last days there are impending terrible times. For men will be lovers of self, avaricious, empty, pretentious, libelous, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, senseless; without parental affections; implacable, calumniators, profligate, inhuman; without love of goodness, traitors, reckless, stupid, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; having an appearance of religion, while denying its power: but turn away from these."—*The New Testament in Modern English.*

Ballantine makes it read:

"I would have you know this, that in the last days trying times will come; for people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boasters, haughty, abusive, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, profane, without family affection, relentless, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God. They will have a form of religion, but will cast off its power. Avoid such people."— *The Riverside New Testament.*

And Goodspeed has this:

"Understand this, that in the last days there are going to be hard times. People will be selfish, avaricious, boastful, arrogant, abusive, undutiful, ungrateful, irreverent, unfeeling, irreconcilable, slanderous, with no self-control, brutal, with no love for what is good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, caring more for pleasure than for God, keeping up the forms of religion, but resisting its influence. Avoid such people."— *The New Testament (an American translation).*

Formalism and Hypocrisy in the Church

What a catalogue of evil is here! And we are not told to surmise this, or to suppose it; we are told to "know" it, to "be assured" of it, to "mark" it, to "understand" it. So we do not need to guess about it. Such a condition is definitely foretold.

And all these evils are to manifest themselves among church members, professed Christians. They have "a form of godliness," but deny "the power thereof;" they "keep up a make-believe of piety, and yet live in defiance of its power;" they "keep up a form of religion," yet "will have nothing to do with it as a force;" they have "an appearance of religion, while denying its power;" they keep up "the forms of religion," but resist its saving influence.

In fulfilment of these striking words, religion today is with many mere philosophic speculation upon truth connected with man's soul. With others it is the performance of relative duties. With others it consists in admiration of the Bible as a book of literary excellence. With others it is the adoption of a creed or connection with a church. With others it consists in bustle and external zeal in good works. In nearly all it lacks LIFE — that profound, intense, glowing life which so marked it in earlier times. And therefore it lacks simplicity, freshness. It is hollow and shallow.

Easy-minded, Second-rate, Hollow, Feeble, Uncertain Religion

The religion of the day is an *easy-minded* religion, without conflict and wrestling, without self-denial and sacrifice. It is a *second-rate* religion, in which there is little grandeur, little noble-mindedness, little elevation, little self-devotedness. It is a *hollow* religion, with a fair exterior, but an aching heart — a heart unsatisfied, not at rest, and with a conscience not at peace with God. It is a *feeble* religion, lacking the sinews and bones of hardier times — very different from the indomitable, fearless, much-enduring, storm-braving religion of apostolic and Reformation days. It is an *uncertain* religion; that is, it is not rooted in certainty and assurance, not the life of a soul assured of pardon.

As a result we behold bondage, heaviness, irksomeness, in the religion of the day. There is a speaking for God, but it is with a faltering tongue. There is a laboring for God, but it is with fettered hands. There is a moving in the way of His commandments, but it is with a heavy drag upon the limbs. It is inefficient and uninfluential.

The Tide of Vanity and Pride

All this catalogue of sins foretold by Paul we are to look for in "the last days" in the church, under an outer pretense of religion, in apostate Christianity. And it is here these things are found. Amid the splendor of Gothic piles and symbolic crosses, altars, and images, these sins prevail. The tide of vanity and pride rolls on side by side with tall steeples and accompanied by worldly worship.

In Jesus Christ there is a redemptive energy, a divine, eternal power. In Him men become new creatures, a new light illuminating their souls, new joys taking possession of their hearts, new hopes alluring them into paths of righteousness and peace. To him in whom Christ lives, the world becomes empty, void, and vain, and loses its hold on the heart. This divine energy which elevates, regenerates, and transforms men, is today ignored and cast aside by the easy religionists of this age. They know nothing of the sacrifices, the furnace and flame, through which the Christian believer comes forth purged and made white. With such, godliness is but a form.

Denial of Christ and His Deity

The religionists of today are perfectly at home in the externals of religion. They rejoice in pompous worship and ecclesiastical ceremonies. But in the inner life of the heart, the working of the Holy Spirit, the renewing of the mind, the beginning of eternal life in the soul, the new birth, the receiving of the Word of God,—in all such matters they are ignorant and blind. Their whole religious life is a round of forms. It places no restraint on unholy passions and ambitions and desires. All inward grace may be lacking, but if the name is on the church roll, with them that fact covers a multitude of sins.

Preachers and people in large numbers have today departed "from the faith" "once delivered unto the saints" in the matter of accepting the fundamentals of the gospel. It is a common thing now for preachers to deny their Lord, to deny His pre-existence, His divine incarnation, His deity, His miracle-working power, His inspired teaching, His substitutionary and expiatory death, His miraculous resurrection, His ascension, His mediatory and intercessory priesthood, and His literal return. And yet those who deny these historical essentials of Christianity, still desire to be known as "Christians"! Christianity today, like its divine Author, is being wounded in the house of its professed friends.

This state of things, so strikingly manifest in the religious world now, arises directly from the fact that men have only "a form of godliness," and "live in defiance of its power," and "will have nothing to do with it as a force."

External forms they delight in, and cling to as if everything depended on them. But of the hidden virtues, those divine energies whereby God transforms sinners into saints, they know nothing. Faith in Christ may wane, the life may be defective, inner spiritual vitality may be lacking; but if the forms are right, if the professions are regular, if the social standing is good, they are accepted. Justice, judgment, and the fear of God — the weightier matters — may be neglected, and covetous idolaters and worldlings stand in full fellowship in the church.

"Turn Away From These"

And in this time, so marked by hypocrisy and formalism, and by departure from the faith, God has a word for His loyal, true-hearted, sincere, faithful people. They are in the midst of this apostasy, surrounded by the faithless, hearing the trumpet given an uncertain sound, and are likely to be confused. To them the apostolic injunction comes (as variously rendered into English), "From such turn away," "turn away from people of this sort," "avoid all such," "turn away from these," "avoid such people."

To this counsel let us give heed. While we note the increasing apostasy in the churches, while we mark the perils

of our times, and learn from them that we are in "the last days," let us keep ourselves pure. Let our feet be planted on the Word of God. Let our ears hear only the voice of the great Shepherd. Follow Him alone. "Turn *away*" from the formal and godless, the faithless and unbelieving, and turn *to* the oracles of God; turn where perchance only

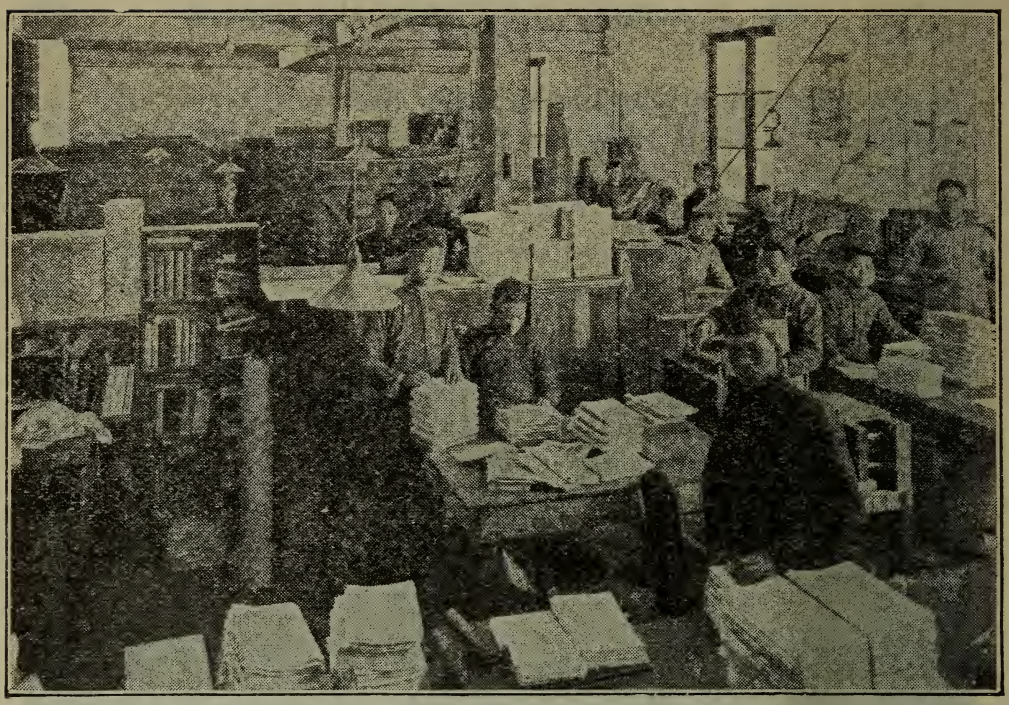
THE FRIEND OF SINNERS KNOCKING AT THE DOOR

"If any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Rev. 3:20.

a few are met together in the name of Christ, but to whom the Lord says, "There am I in the midst."

It matters not how few these may be, if Christ is with them. It matters not how despised and humble they be, if the great Immanuel honors them with His presence. It matters not if they meet in lowly places, yea, even in the dens and caves of the earth, if only the Lord is among them, for with Him is light and life and joy and abiding peace.

Dark as is the picture painted; forbidding and disheartening as is the fact of widespread apostasy from true religion, remember that it is one of the signs that our Lord is coming soon to take to Himself His redeemed and waiting people.



CHINESE IN SHANGHAI, CHINA, PRINTING THE GOSPEL
IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE

A TECHNICAL SCHOOL IN BURMA

NATIVE CHRISTIANS AND THEIR TEMPORARY CHURCH IN LUZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

THE TWELFTH SIGN — THE GOSPEL TO ALL NATIONS

THE greatest sign of all, the most certain sign of the second coming of Christ in the immediate future, has been left to be discussed last.

This is the announcement, the proclamation, of His coming to all the world and in every part of the globe, to warn the inhabitants of the earth and prepare them for His return.

Such an announcement is a subject of prophecy. Such a proclamation will fulfil prophecy. Such a message will constitute the surest sign of the nearness of the return of our Lord.

In describing to His disciples on the Mount of Olives the signs of His second coming, Jesus said:

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24: 14.

Weymouth translates this passage:

"This good news of the kingdom shall be proclaimed throughout the whole world to set the evidence before all the Gentiles; and then the end will come."— *The New Testament in Modern Speech.*

Agreeing with this is the prophecy found in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Here is a great threefold message. This message is the closing proclamation of the gospel, to be delivered to the world just before the return of Jesus; for just as soon as it is given, the prophet sees the Lord's second coming, and describes it as follows:

"I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe." Rev. 14: 14, 15.

The Last Message of the Gospel

This last message of the gospel is to be preached in and to all the earth. The prophet thus speaks of it:

"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Rev. 14: 6.

Before the Lord comes the second time, then, there will be an announcement made to all the earth regarding His coming. Summed up in this announcement there will be the very fulness of the gospel of Christ. It will be the "everlasting gospel." At the same time it will be the "gospel of the kingdom."

In fulfilment of this prophecy there has been, during the last century, such an opening of doors as has never before been witnessed in the history of the church.

Preparations for this advancement of the gospel began with the Protestant Reformation. Describing these especially as making possible the achievements of the nineteenth century, Arthur T. Pierson says:

"The preparations for missions in our day have long been in progress. Such a work could scarce be a blessing to the world while as yet the church was unblest. Five centuries ago, what preparations were needful! The church could scarcely have evangelistic zeal without evangelical faith. Under the rubbish of ritualism and rationalism, the precious treasure of primitive truth had been buried for hundreds of years. The church was deformed, and must be reformed; and God raised up, with a strange simultaneousness, at great strategic centers in the Continent of Europe and the British Isles, as well as in America, a great band of reformers: John Huss in Bohemia, Luther in Germany, John

Calvin in Switzerland, Savonarola in Italy, John de Wycliffe, John Bunyan, John Wesley in England, John Knox in Scotland, Jonathan Edwards in America — these are a few of the men who, from 1320 to 1757, were raised up by God to go before and prepare the way for modern missions. Within these four centuries the greatest body of reformers ever on earth stirred the church to new piety and activity.

"Within the same period, various other forces fell into line, for the same purpose. The fall of Constantinople in 1453, dispersing Greek scholars with their Greek Testaments through Southern Europe, paved the way for new translation and wider diffusion of the Scriptures. To this period also belong the most remarkable inventions of history, and these so singularly fitted to promote missions that the 'Theology of Inventions' alone expresses their obvious relation to the will of God. Was it any chance that, almost simultaneously with the period of the Reformers and the revival of learning, gave to the world the mariner's compass, the printing press, steam as a motive power, and paper as a cheap substitute for parchment and papyrus? The mariner's compass and steam solved the problem of world-wide navigation and transportation; the printing press and paper solved the other problem of wide diffusion of the Word of God, and so the great preparations were well-nigh complete: the Reformed Church, with evangelical truth as her weapon, and with new facilities for sending forth laborers; and the Word of God, loosed from its bonds, ready for translation into all tongues and dissemination among all peoples."—*"The Modern Mission Century," pages 15, 16.*

Dazzling Marvels of History

The developments which have opened doors everywhere for the gospel to enter, and the means by which the gospel can be rapidly carried everywhere, are thus discussed by the same writer:

"The fact is, men now live amidst marvels of history that so dazzle by their frequency and glory, that there is no little danger of being but half awake to the movements of God's providence, and, so, of losing the chance of the ages. The ancients boasted of their seven wonders of the world, such as the Colossus at Rhodes, the temple of Diana at Ephesus, the sepulcher of Mausolus, and the statue of Jupiter Olympus; but as Joseph Cook suggests, there are at least seven modern wonders that far surpass them. They deserve to be called wonders, for they are absolutely unique and unprecedented, and they all indicate a supernatural hand at the helm of affairs, guiding the world in its development. They are wonders of the world, for they are all cosmopolitan, having to do with the whole globe and the race of man. The seven wonders we refer to are: Exploration, communication, civilization, assimilation, emancipation, education, and organization; all world-wide, and all the product of the last fifty years. They belong to the nineteenth century, and have been the possession of no other.

"The God who governs this world, ordained that such stupendous wonders should all characterize this missionary century. The command of our Lord rings out through the centuries, 'Go into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.' Is it of no importance and has it

no significance, that, at last, we know the whole world — the field we are bidden to sow with the seed of the kingdom? that we have such facilities for reaching every nation that no peoples are any longer afar off? that civilization is so widespread that barbarism scarcely anywhere survives? . . . that there remains no nation of any standing that openly encourages human slavery? that every grand preparation, of steam, electricity, printing press, postal union, common schools, etc., has been given to us for doing world-wide work? and that, for the first time in history, the race has so learned the value of organized effort, as that men are throughout the world combining to do what no one man alone could accomplish?

"One very remarkable feature of this day of God deserves adequate description. We might call it acceleration, concentration, condensation; but there is no fit word for it. Centuries are practically crowded into years, and years into days. Travel is so rapid that what would have taken months, one hundred years ago, is now easily accomplished in weeks, perhaps in days. We keep in touch, day by day, with the whole world, so that, in the morning papers, we read the news from Japan and China, India and Africa, as naturally as from London and Dublin, New York and Chicago. So much can be done in a brief space of time and over a vast space of territory, that practically time and space are annihilated, and nothing seems any longer impossible to human achievement. The last fifty years have brought to the race an absolutely new era and epoch, abundant illustrations of which it would be easy to adduce."—*Id., pp. 43, 44.*

A New Era and Epoch

Thus the Word of God has been printed and disseminated, translated into hundreds of languages, and made accessible to hundreds of millions. Tracts, papers, and books teaching the truths of the gospel have multiplied amazingly, and been distributed far and wide. Missionaries have penetrated into all the world. Facilities for rapid transportation have come into being. News and information are flying round the world at a rate never dreamed of before. Missionary organizations by the score have been perfected and established, and are moved by the determination to lighten all the world with the glory of the gospel. And by these means, a fulfilment of God's Word, the gospel is being "preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations."

This Gospel of the Kingdom

It was not, however, the gospel in its ordinary setting and in merely its general phases, that was to be preached in all the world. It was "this gospel of the kingdom."

While the spread of the gospel into all the world has, therefore, a decided bearing on the fulfilment of this pre-

dicted sign, it does not cover all that is involved. The sign predicted does not point to the world-wide dissemination of a partial gospel, or some special phase of the gospel, but to the whole gospel in a particular setting, a setting governed by the special time of its presentation, the time when the long-anticipated kingdom is about to appear. The gospel then becomes "this gospel of the kingdom." It is the good news about the kingdom, the coming kingdom. It is, indeed, the good news about the coming of the King in His kingdom.

Hence the fulfilment of this prophecy which constitutes it a sign of the Lord's return is the extension unto all the world of the gospel of Christ in the particular setting of the announcement of Christ's return. The gospel will then be a world-wide warning and proclamation of His coming. And it is this proclamation and warning, "this gospel of the kingdom," which is to be "preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations," just before the end.

This is consistent with all the former dealings of God with the people of this world. Before the destruction of the world by the flood, He sent Noah to give the message of the coming deluge and point out the way of escape. Before the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah, He sent His angels to warn the inhabitants and guide Lot to safety. Before the impending destruction of Nineveh, He sent Jonah to sound the proclamation of approaching doom. Before Jerusalem fell the first time, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and others announced its fate. Before it fell the second time, Jesus and His disciples foretold its destruction.

A Message of Salvation

Always in connection with these visitations of judgment the way of escape was pointed out as well as the impending destruction announced. These, therefore, were messages of salvation, which, if heeded and followed, would have brought deliverance. Always there were a few, a handful, a remnant, who heeded the message, and were saved because of heeding it. Always the great mass of those who heard it turned away from it, refused to follow it, rejected it, and were overwhelmed in the ensuing destruction.

So is "this gospel of the kingdom." It is a warning of coming judgment. At the same time it is the announcement of the coming of the kingdom. It is the truth for this time. In it is not only information regarding the "time of the end," but it points the way of salvation from the destruction which is coming. It is a saving message as well as a warning message.

And it is this message which is to be "preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations,"—the announcement of the coming of the Lord.

This great sign is now being displayed before our eyes. This message of the Lord's second coming is being taken to all the world.

A Divinely Commissioned People

Consider what is necessarily involved in the fulfilment of this prophecy. Before such a message can be taken to all the world, a people commissioned to do this must be raised up. They must be brought under profound conviction that they are instruments of God to do this very work. They must set about the doing of it in a way which God can use to accomplish the results He has predicted.

This involves the bringing into existence of a movement with a definite body of teaching and belief. Connected with this movement there must be created agencies and means and equipment especially fashioned to accomplish the design of God.

This would mean the appointment of a ministry teaching and preaching the same truths in the same setting all round the world, speaking the same things everywhere. This cannot be done without a special training for such a ministry and its associated helpers. Training schools giving this education and preparation will therefore be an essential part of this movement. Such training schools must be located at widely separated places, and must conduct their work in many languages, if all the world is to be reached.

Indispensable to such a movement will be the "silent preacher," the gospel in type, the printed message. Connected, therefore, with this movement will appear publish-

THE WORLD'S HARVEST TIME

"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35.

THE GOSPEL COMMISSION

"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Mark 16:15.

ing houses in many lands, printing "this gospel of the kingdom" in many tongues, and distributing their publications by evangelistic colporteurs everywhere.

A World-wide Mission Movement

Such a movement will send out missionaries, establish mission stations, conduct mission schools, organize a world-wide mission movement. This mission movement must be supported. A great financial, never-ending, and always-enlarging campaign for missions by which those who are connected with the movement are enabled to carry out their divine commission, will be an essential factor in this program.

We are to look, then, for a religious movement with churches, schools, publishing houses, a world-wide organization, backed by a people convinced that they are divinely commissioned to carry to all the world the proclamation of the second coming of Christ.

Does such a movement, such a people, such an organization exist? Is the sign being fulfilled?

Profoundly convinced that they are commissioned of God to do this very work, there is a people who have established just such a movement, with just such an organization, with a world-wide mission program, with schools and publishing houses, with missionaries everywhere, and with a supporting financial campaign to carry the work forward to completion.

More important than the movement and the people, is the fact that through these means God is warning the world of the near return of His Son, and sending this message "unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Rev. 14:6.

The Marvel of Missions

For this message of the Lord's return is being heralded everywhere. Round all the circle of the earth, over all the seven seas, missionaries, ministers, colporteurs, and gospel workers have penetrated, bearing this special message of the coming of Christ. Within a single generation this movement has come into existence and widened out to encompass the

world. It is the marvel of missions. It is the march of God. It is the way of the Lord. It is the heralding of the coming King. It is "this gospel of the kingdom." It is the finishing of the work of human salvation. It is the last gospel message. And it is the greatest and most certain sign of the soon coming of the Saviour.

Let it be noticed that "this gospel of the kingdom" is to be preached "for a witness unto," not for the conversion of, the nations. It will not be generally accepted, even by professed Christians. It will not be popular. No special message of this character ever has been popular. It will be preached, as Weymouth translates it, "to set the evidence before" the world. It will present all the evidence of the Lord's coming, all the signs and the fulfilment of the prophecies. But the evidence will not be generally accepted. It will gather a few here and there of devoted believers, who will join their efforts to those of like faith, and press on with the message. And these God will bless to such an extent that, through His power and grace, they will be able to warn all the world before "the end" comes.

To be among them, knowing the times in which we live, knowing the commission of God in view of these times, charged with a great mission from heaven, clothed with God's own spirit of power in service, surrendered altogether to do His will, sharing in the work of finishing the gospel on earth, co-operating with God in the work of human salvation, preparing to meet the Saviour Himself, and "bringing back the King,"—ah, that is the loftiest privilege ever granted to the children of men in any age of the world. And the rapid progress of that work is the crowning sign that the coming of the Lord "is near, even at the door."

CHRIST COMING IN GLORY

"Unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb. 9:28.

EDEN TO EDEN BY WAY OF THE CROSS

"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6:23.

AWAITING THE BLESSED HOPE OF HIS GLORIOUS APPEARING

We have reached a crisis. We are witnessing the close of a long series of experiments made by man in an attempt to improve and save himself. And man has failed.

The world is more wicked and lawless than ever since the deluge. Peace has not spread her reign among the nations. Misrule has not departed. Righteousness does not sit on the throne of the nations. Holiness does not beautify the homes of men. Man's merchandise is not consecrated to God. Man's wealth is not laid at the feet of Jesus. The human heart remains still deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Oppression, cruelty, selfishness, lust, strife, dissension, hatred, and murder are still uneradicated, unsubdued, unmitigated. Man has found no cure for these maladies. They rage on, and he is powerless.

The curse still pervades the earth and poisons the air. Man cannot disinfect it. The thorn and thistle still remind us of the primal sin. Man cannot uproot them. Disease still

haunts the body. Man cannot drive it out. Death still smites its daily myriads. Man tries in vain to disarm it. The grave still receives our loved, and preys upon the beautiful. And man pleads in vain that it should give back the joy of his heart and the desire of his eyes.

The Fruits of Adam's Sin

Such are the fruits of Adam's sin, and such the powerlessness of his children to remove so much as one of the ten thousand evils. It is demonstrated that man can ruin, but not restore, a world. He has made attempts at restoration, but sadly and miserably failed. He has made attempts at progress, but they have been abortive. Progress in evil, progress in alienation from God,— these are the features of greatest prominence in his history.

But this progress in evil has a limit. God has set bounds to it that He will not allow man to pass. He will not permit this earth of His to become altogether a hell. He will make the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder thereof He will restrain. He will allow a certain amount and for a certain duration, but no more. Neither of these is indefinite. We are nearing their boundaries.

The Crowning Hope

And this is well. It is time the good displaced the evil, and the blessing the curse. The second Adam is at hand, and with Him, the kingdom and the glory. He brings the cure. He knits the broken world. He rebukes disease and sorrow. He binds death. He rifles the grave. He delivers creation. He establishes a peaceful, righteous throne. He brings in an ever-widening knowledge, an ever-brightening glory. The dishonored past shall not be remembered nor come into mind.

There are many who love Jesus so much that they would like to see Him. These are pleased at the thought of His soon coming. They are designated as those "that love His appearing." They have in their hearts this crowning hope. All their expectation of future good hangs on this. And the very thought that He will soon come has its effect upon them now.

This effect could be nothing but beneficial. It is a good hope. It must, therefore, bring about good results. If they were looking for an evil thing, and their minds were willingly and constantly dwelling upon the evil, it could do nothing but bring about evil results. But this hope is high and holy and noble. It must, therefore, bring about corresponding results.

Indeed, there is no more mighty motive for good that God has placed before the minds of His saints, both to impress their own hearts and to influence those about them, than this. It is pre-eminent in the power of its influence. Next to the inward working of God's Spirit it is the controlling force in the system of divine revelation. Nothing else can be compared to it.

The Meeting Place of Two Eternities

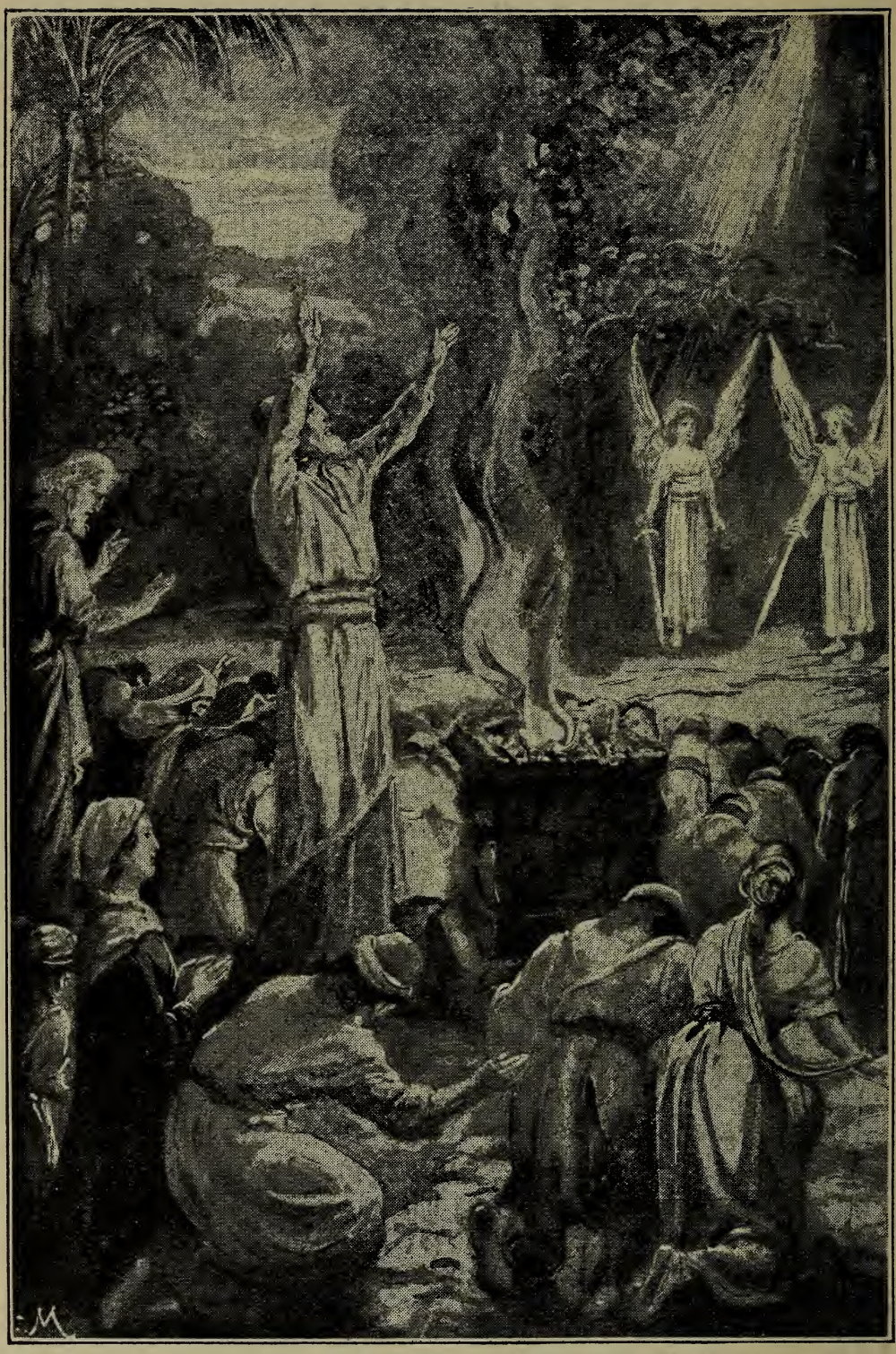
It affects alike the destinies of the living and the dead. For awful weight, solemn majesty, impressive influence, and awakening power, not even the shortness of life, the solemnities of death, the fear of hell, or the hope of glory, can equal the great fact that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the crucified Saviour and glorified High Priest, the humbled and exalted Redeemer, shall soon come again in the glory of His Father to judge the world.

This great event marks the meeting place of two eternities. It brings the crisis in the history of the planet and the race. It strikes the hour which bears the burden of immortal destinies. It closes up the present dispensation of mercy to the world. It opens to our view the scenes of glory which shall endure throughout the ages of the ages.

The effect of this hope on the one who believes it is good. It has a tendency to cause people to become purer. Only holy men and women will be able to stand in that day. And so "every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:3.

A Purifying Hope

Paul wrote to Titus regarding the effect of this "blessed hope" on the believer's life, saying:



ADAM'S DESCENDANTS WORSHIPING AT THE GATE OF THEIR LOST EDEN HOME

"Thou, O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto Thee shall it come, even the first dominion." Micah 4:8.

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and *purify* unto Himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works.*" Titus 2: 12-14.

It is in view of our Lord's return that Paul urges the need of brotherly love and unblamable holiness:

"The Lord make you to *increase and abound in love* one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end He may stablish your hearts *unblamable in holiness* before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints." 1 Thess. 3: 12, 13.

Belief of this great truth and the cherishing of this lofty hope result in precious blessings to the believer. Among these blessings, seven stand out prominently:

The Effect of the Glorious Hope

It leads to an enlarged study of the Word of God. Let the mind and heart become convinced of the Lord's return, and the mind becomes at once interested in all the subjects of the Bible. The writings of the prophets become of special interest. Scripture is compared with scripture, and a flood of light is poured upon the sacred page. Object after object of interest is disclosed. Those portions of the Scriptures which before excited no emotion, now call forth the deepest feeling.

It draws away from the love of the world. We may have had our imaginations captivated by the lovely things about us. Our fond hearts may have been too deeply pledged to earthly joys. But when we learn that "the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up," who, then, will continue to seek after the world's wealth, its silver and its gold? Who will be covetous when he believes the Lord Jesus is at hand to destroy the worthless treasure of earth? Who will be self-indulgent when he expects the immediate return of his Lord? Who will be dazzled by the world's low ambition and paltry splendor when he is seeking the speedy conferment of the crown of glory?

There is that in the Saviour's speedy coming which dries up the springs of worldliness, mortifies the schemes of earthly

ambition, makes the joys of the world to pall on the senses, and leaves no glory here by reason of the glory that excelleth.

It reproves timidity and want of earnestness. Expecting to see the vials of wrath poured out on a godless world, who will be afraid to confess his Lord? Who can continue cold or lukewarm when he expects soon to see the saints of God caught up to meet their Lord? The sense of the nearness of these awe-inspiring events steels the heart to endure, and nerves the hand to achieve. It elevates the mind, gives boldness to the heart, creates promptness in design, produces firmness in action. It causes disregard of the promptings of self-interest, and makes a man careful only to be found in that day a firm and consistent follower of the Lord Jesus.

It arouses one to the need of assurance. Who can rest in uncertainty as to his acceptance with God when he believes the Lord will presently separate the saints from the apostates, and destroy the sinners? Such a consideration creates a profound desire for a personal interest in Christ, an assurance that we are His. It is impossible to desire the coming of our God unless we are fully reconciled to God. Thus the soul is stirred to more earnest prayer, and is thus led to a close communion with the Divine Being.

Strong Consolation

It gives consolation and comfort in trouble. Some one dearly loved has been taken away, some one who was the light of our eyes. We are left to lament our bereavement in loneliness and darkness. But light breaks in on our desolation:

"This we say unto you by the word of the Lord, That we that are alive, and are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven, with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." 1 Thess. 4: 15-18, A. R. V.

And, O, blessed thought, His coming is near. Then soon shall we be restored to the society of those we have loved. Soon we shall see — and recognize — the saints of earth arising from their graves. And then, with unutterable surprise

and profound joy, we "shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." Here, indeed, is strong consolation. The near prospect of glory cheers the heart, depressed with trouble and gloom as it may have been. The darkness of the present is dissipated by the bright realities of the future.

Do floods of tribulation overwhelm you? Does the fear of death lay hold of you? Do the sorrows of this vale of tears encompass you? Is the hour of darkness with you? Do the workings of the tempter make you afraid? "Behold, thy salvation cometh." Lift up your head, for your redemption is drawing near. The Lord, your strength and deliverer, is at hand, even at the doors. Then brood no more over the sorrows of this life. Brightness is about to shine all along your pathway. Your sorrow is about to be turned into joy. And you shall "rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

It provides the greatest of all incentives to Christian work and service. In proportion as we believe that "the coming of the Lord draweth nigh," every nerve will be strained for exertion, every energy put forth, every moment employed, every talent turned to the best advantage. An intense longing for the salvation of the souls of others will be aroused. Missions, both home and foreign, will be whole-heartedly advocated and loyally supported, that men may be saved from impending judgments, and that we may finish God's work, and that the end may come. No more powerful motive for service can be imagined. How strong it is, how pressing, how abiding!

Lastly, it leads to earnest watchfulness. Believing that our Lord is at hand, there can be no thought of slumber or inattention. The thoughtful and considerate follower of Christ, having the sure word of prophecy whereunto he takes heed, walks circumspectly. His mind is dwelling on the Lord's coming in glory, the resurrection of the righteous dead, the glorification of the saints, the dismay of the backslidden church, the tremendous overthrow of the ungodly world. To him these are daily and familiar thoughts, filling his imagination and deeply affecting his heart. Therefore,

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS
(See Matt. 25 : 1-13.)

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matt. 25 : 13.

he is watchful. Satan and the world he keeps at bay. The desires of the flesh and of the mind he successfully combats in the strength of his Lord. Continually thrilling in his ears and echoing in his heart is the word, "The Lord is at hand." So he is sober, alert, watching unto prayer, with his loins girt and his light burning, even like a man who waits and watches for his Lord.

O Blessed Day!

O blessed day! O matchless Christ! What happiness of heart to be near Thee! What fulness of rapture! How exceeding abundantly above all that we asked or thought!

To be with Jesus! O, soul-stirring thought! To be near His person and enjoy His society! The glorious Christ, the Holy One of Israel, the eternal Son of God; and we looking upon Him, being with Him! What completion of happiness! Truly, in His presence is fulness of joy, and at His right hand are pleasures forevermore. Greater than the great ones of earth is He. Infinitely higher than the most exalted of earthly kings. And He bids *me* welcome! He smiles upon *me!* He showers *me* with His favors!

And the meeting of long-separated friends! How the heart leaps forward to that meeting, when our loved ones shall be clasped in our arms again! "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence." Ps. 50:3. And one thing He says is this:

"Gather My saints together unto Me." "And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven." Ps. 50:5; Mark 13:27.

How many sad partings this world has witnessed! Cruel, indeed, is the separation of death. Terrible is the havoc the destroyer has wrought. Families have been divided, friends have been sundered, lovers have been torn apart. How precious, then, is the promise of God:

"I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by My name." Isa. 43:5-7.

"They shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God." Luke 13:29.

"PEACE BE UNTO YOU."

"Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20.

That Morn of Morns

And so we look forward to that morn of morns when once again the Lord Jesus shall visit the earth. We strain to catch the first sound of His voice, that voice which will reverberate from hillside and mountain top, echo through the silent valleys, sweep across the wide and treeless plains, and pierce even to the remote caves of old ocean. We wait to see that voice, as it rolls through the earth, strike the shackles from grim death, break open the tombs of the saints, and pierce even to their dead ears. We yearn to behold the sleeping ones, awakened by that commanding voice, feeling the thrill of life once more, raise their heads from their moldy pillows, rise from the cold and chilling turf with a shout of rapture, toss aside the coverlid of dust, and spring joyfully into glorious life again.

A vast congregation they make as the redeemed gather to greet their Redeemer, coming from east and west, north and south, from height and depth, from land and sea, from torrid and frigid zones, to answer the call of the Master. They come in tremendous troops, guided by angels, and sweeping upward together, take their stand on the glorious sea of glass before the great white throne of God.

And then, after a time, back to this earth again, made new and clean and sweet, they come. And on this regenerated earth, with the curse removed, and under the new heavens clear and bright, all the righteous, with their blessed King and Redeemer, shall make their eternal home.

Wave After Wave of Splendor

Far out over the plains of the new earth will flash wave after wave of glory. Fulfilled is the oath of God, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." Num. 14:21. No freezing cold. No burning heat. No gloomy clouds. No darkness of night. No wasting sickness. No cruel pain. No tears. No death. No graveyards. No temptations. No sin. No partings. Only waving of palms. Only victory. Only praise, rest, and glory, now and evermore, world without end.

O morning of splendor, awake, and bring the promised deliverance! Surely, "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed." Rom. 8:18.

THE COMING OF HIS FEET

In the crimson of the morning, in the whiteness of the noon,
In the amber glory of the day's retreat,
In the midnight, robed in darkness, or the gleaming of the moon,
I listen for the coming of His feet.

I heard His weary footsteps on the sands of Galilee,
On the temple's marble pavement, on the street,
Worn with weight of sorrow, faltering up the slopes of Calvary,
The sorrow of the coming of His feet.

Down the minster-aisles of splendor, from betwixt the cherubim,
Through the wondering throng, with motion strong and fleet,
Sounds His victor tread, approaching with a music far and dim —
The music of the coming of His feet.

Sandaled not with sheen of silver, girded not with woven gold,
Weighted not with shimmering gems and odors sweet,
But white-winged and shod with glory in the Taborlight of old —
The glory of the coming of His feet.

He is coming, O my spirit! with His everlasting peace,
With His blessedness immortal and complete,
He is coming, O my spirit! and His coming brings release,
I listen for the coming of His feet.

— *Anonymous.*

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